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BRITISH PREACHERS

BRITISH PREACHERS 1927

The ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

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Right Rev. FREDERIC L. DEANE, D.D.

WILFRED THOMASON GRENFELL, M.D.

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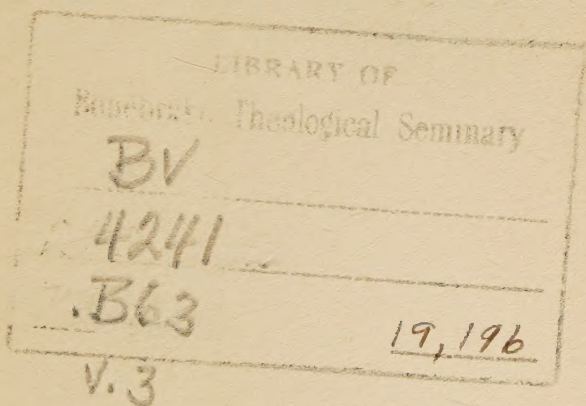
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BRITISH PREACHERS

THIRD SERIES

Edited by
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NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY
LONDON AND EDINBURGH

First Published February 1927

Made in Great Britain by
THE BOTOLPH PRINTING WORKS
GATE STREET, KINGSWAY, W.C.2.

EDITOR'S NOTE

"BRITISH PREACHERS" has entered upon its third year, and is now an established annual volume. The two previous volumes have been well received throughout the United Kingdom, our Dominions and America, which has required reprints. The selections for the present volume have been made with the help of the Lord Bishop of Winchester; the Rev. Principal A. E. Garvie, D.D.; and the Rev. James Black, D.D., to whom the Editor is indebted.

PRESENTED BY

Dr. A. T. Howard

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THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK
(*The Most Rev. Cosmo Gordon Lang, D.D., D.C.L.,
LL.D., D.Litt.*).

HE was born on October 31st, 1864. His father was the Very Rev. J. Marshall Lang, D.D., Vice-Chancellor of the University of Aberdeen. He was a scholar of Balliol College, Oxford. He was elected a Fellow of All Souls College in 1888 and has remained a Fellow ever since, except that from 1893-1896 he was Fellow and Dean of Divinity at Magdalen College, of which he is an Honorary Fellow. After studying for the Bar for two years, he was ordained in 1890; was curate of Leeds Parish Church 1890-1893, Vicar of St. Mary's, the University Church, Oxford 1894-1896, and Vicar of Portsea 1896-1901. He was appointed Canon of St. Paul's in 1901, and in the same year consecrated Bishop of Stepney. In January, 1909, he was translated to the Archbishopric of York.

THE ETERNAL SPIRIT IN HUMANITY AND IN THE CHURCH *

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

*" A spirit holy, manifold, subtil, freely moving,
loving what is good, keen, unhindered, beneficent,
loving toward man, all-powerful, all-surveying
and penetrating through all spirits."*

Wisdom vii, 22, 23.

*" When the Spirit of Truth is come . . . he
shall glorify me : for he shall take of mine and
shall declare it unto you."* John xvi, 13, 14.

THE high aim of this Congress is to recall the mind of the Church to the reality, presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It is a timely summons. Our generation is one wherein great questions are moving, great crises arising, great decisions impending, fateful for the future of mankind. Is the Church of Christ to have a place of power in answering these questions, meeting these crises, guiding these decisions? This can only be through some fresh access of light and fire and power from the Spirit of God. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the new strength which might come to a Church which deliberately set itself to recover faith in the Holy

* A sermon preached before the Church Congress at Southport on October 5th, 1926.

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Spirit, and to stir up the gift of Himself within it. Assuredly the very effort would take us behind and beyond the controversies of the hour. At least it would enable us to see them in their right proportions. It would carry the energies of the Church out of the shallow eddies of what is comparatively trivial and temporary into the main current of the eternal purpose of God. Pray we therefore that the Congress may prepare the Church in this diocese, and in this land, to open its ears to hear, and to consecrate its will to follow, what at this time the Spirit saith to the Churches.

At this opening service I would ask you to think with me about two aspects of the Way of the Eternal Spirit—His work in the spirit of man and His work within the Church of Christ.

First, lift your thoughts to the Eternal Spirit as one—

“ Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky and in the mind of man ;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought
And rolls through all things.”

Especially in the mind of man—there, to quote the words of my first text, as “ a spirit holy, manifold, subtil, freely moving, loving what is good, keen, unhindered, beneficent, loving toward man, all powerful, all surveying, and penetrating through all spirits.” Think of Him urging the servants of Science to their quest of the secrets of the universe,

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whereof He is Himself the vital energy. Think of Him sustaining and guiding the mind of the philosopher as he "voyages through strange seas of Thought alone." Think of Him within the soul of the artist—poet, painter, builder, musician—opening his eyes to see, his ears to hear, visions and sounds of beauty, filling Him with ardour as of a flame never extinguished and never satisfied to arrest and give expression to what he hears or sees. Think of Him giving guidance and courage to the statesman in his care for the peace and welfare of the people. Think of Him moving within the "spirits of the age," inspiring, disciplining, judging these motive forces of human history. In every sincere and disinterested motion of the spirit of man towards truth, beauty, goodness, He is present, manifold and one. In this vast sweep of the Spirit there are always, we may say with reverence, one method and one goal—the method, to respect the freedom of man, quickening and purifying but never forcing; the goal, to bring all the unceasing movements of the human spirit often through strange and devious paths round to God, to that absolute truth and beauty and goodness which He is, and so to advance that return to God which is the purpose of Creative Love.

Secondly, think of the Eternal Spirit dwelling within the Church of Christ. Once in time God, beholding how His children wandered and stumbled in their search of Him, disclosed His Mind and Will and Love in the life, the words, the deeds, the death, the rising of the Man Christ Jesus. That supreme self-disclosure of God, though complete in itself, was

limited in respect of man's capacity to apprehend it. Jesus knew in His own human experience how slow to understand His first disciples were : knew that even they in their generation could not bear many of the things He desired to say to them. And their generation would pass ; other generations would come after them with their own needs and problems. So He promised to them, and to all succeeding disciples, " another Paraclete," another Representative and Interpreter of God, the Spirit of Truth, Who in all ages would take of His, of the Gospel of His revelation, and would declare it unto them. The promise has been fulfilled. We are its heirs. Ever since the first Pentecost, the Eternal Spirit has been in the midst of men in a new manner, dwelling within the Church as in a 'body, ever present to enable the Church to interpret the unchanging truth afresh to meet the everchanging needs of each generation.

Have, then, before your minds these two great movements of the Divine Spirit, in the spirit of man and in the Church of Christ ; but remember that they are movements of one and the self-same Spirit. For men are prone, if the word may be allowed, to divide the Spirit. Just as the schisms of the Church have, in St. Paul's indignant phrase, divided Christ, so its temper and attitude have tended to divide the Holy Spirit. The Church has sometimes looked with indifference, if not suspicion, upon the free movement of the spirit of man in science, literature, art, politics, forgetting that wherever that movement is sincere and disinterested the Spirit of God is within it. Its very freedom is a token of His presence

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for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty." The result of this division is on the one hand that the Church is, so to say, turned in upon itself. It loses touch with the great currents of human thought and effort. Its worship becomes dull and conventional. Its teaching becomes hard and dogmatic. Its internal controversies become bitter. Authority stiffens and stifles when the breath of liberty no longer moves around it. The letter kills. On the other hand, the free spirit of man, finding itself strange and unwelcome in the Church, tends to break away from the Spirit of God, to become arbitrary and wilful, to lose reverence and self-control. Liberty, for lack of the restraining hand of some sympathetic authority, drifts into licence. I suppose the most complete and tragic instance of what I have called the division of the Spirit occurred in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. New winds were blowing upon the fixed order of the Middle Ages. New light was streaming in; new voices were in the air. Assuredly a breath of the Divine Spirit was astir. But the Church shut its windows to the new air, closed its shutters upon the new light, turned a deaf ear to the new voices, and sought to silence them. Because it knew not that a time of visitation from the Spirit of God had come, the Church was hardened, its unity was broken, and a breach was made between its life and the free spirit of man.

The lesson of that tragedy is writ large for our learning. Since that time of mingled hope and disaster the Church in this land may justly claim that

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more than any Church in Christendom it has kept its mind open to new light and learning. Its priests have never silenced its prophets—indeed, some of its boldest prophets have been its priests. It issues no Index of Prohibited Books. It has encouraged the spirit of free inquiry and the lay mind has always found a home within it. But there is now and always need of vigilance lest we lose our honour—need of the reminder, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” Let us beware of any tendency to shut our Church life in upon itself, to be so absorbed in merely ecclesiastical organisation and controversy that we have no longer ears to hear what the Spirit of God is saying in the mind and movement of the world around us.

Our wisdom is to remember always that it is one and the self-same Spirit who moves in the ever expanding life and thought and effort of man, and who dwells within the Church of Christ. We are to conceive of Him arousing questions in the spirit of man, creating wants, stimulating movements which can only find their full answer, satisfaction and goal in Christ. We are to conceive of Him within the Church waiting and ready to take of the things of Christ and to declare them to the Church, that the Church may declare them to the world in answer to the call which He Himself is sounding there. It is both in “the general heart of man” and in the inner heart of the Church that this same Holy Spirit speaks. A sure test, therefore, of the spiritual vitality of the Church now and always will be its quickness at once to discern the Spirit of God in the

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wide movements of man's mind and heart, and to learn from the same Spirit so to interpret the things of Christ that these movements may find their way to Him.

For illustration of our main thought this morning, let me speak, though it must be very briefly and imperfectly, of three movements in this twentieth century England wherein the Spirit of God seems to be calling for the witness of the Church of Christ.

First, consider the new movement in the world of Science, which is feeling after a spiritual interpretation of the universe. For long years Science was so inevitably occupied and excited by its amazing conquests of the power of Nature, by following up in its several departments the marvellous discoveries it had made, that it had no time or care to look beyond. It was indeed impatient of all ideas and inquiries which could not be submitted to its own triumphant methods. But now it is beginning to ask questions about fundamental presuppositions hitherto taken for granted, about the meaning of the universe as a whole. It is beginning to feel the need of a philosophy. It is realising that all its discoveries lead to that sense of mystery which is the vestibule of God's presence : for, once men bow their heads in reverent silence before the ultimate mystery of things, they are not far from God.

What is to be the attitude of the Church to this movement ? It is almost folly to attempt in a few minutes to give any answer to a question so far-reaching. But this at least may be said—the attitude of the Church must be one of the fullest

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sympathy and trust. The Church must indeed leave Science to take its own way, to find its own road to ultimate truth. It is not for the Church to pronounce formally either for or against any conclusions which in any sphere sincere scientific method may reach. But the Church will not merely be detached. Its members will be ready to accept whatever truths in the region of natural science or historical criticism seem to be really established, and to welcome them as new revelations of the divine working. And for the future, it will be entirely unafraid, knowing that the Spirit of Truth is not divided, and that no revelation of God in Science can be finally inconsistent with His revelation in Christ. Within a Church guided by this temper we may confidently hope that the Holy Spirit will raise up thinkers and teachers who will be able to build bridges between the two revelations of which He is Himself the one agent; to take of the things of Christ and to declare them to the scientific mind in such wise that they may be understood and welcomed.

Secondly, there is the spirit of eager inquiry and discussion about religion among the youth of this post-war generation. They are full of questions, asked often with the impatience and impetuosity of youth. They are in no mood to listen to the voice of authority. For they are thinking for themselves; and they will accept no answers which do not express or appeal to real and vital experience. Here again the Church must meet the movement with sympathy—not unmixed with kindly humour—and also with respect. For surely there is something

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deeper here than the mere impatience and self-confidence of youth. There is a real sincerity; and if there is sincerity must we not see a sign of the Spirit of truth breaking through the conventionality, the "secondhandedness," which is always the weakness of traditional religion, impelling towards reality and first-hand experience? It behoves us all, and especially clergy, teachers, and parents, to meet this spirit of the young by ourselves thinking out afresh the reasons of the Faith we profess: for we cannot hope to make it theirs unless we first make it anew our own.

But there is need of new methods of approach to these eager questioners. We ought to provide, in every diocese, where it is possible in every parish, gatherings of the youth of different classes, corresponding to different stages of education, where frank questions are encouraged and answers equally frank given. They would be schools of inquiry, informal and unconventional, meeting either regularly or at special times and places—catechetical schools for our own generation such as in another would have delighted Origen. Many men, priests and laymen, and women, might find here a special vocation, and train themselves to be teachers, teaching as fellow-searchers. These companies would meet in an atmosphere of real and simple devotion, so that times of quiet, of prayer, of sacrament, would bring into all the liveliness of free discussion some sense of the depth and solemnity of the themes discussed. I believe, and experience shows, that opportunities of this kind would be widely used, and would prove

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to be surprising in the interest aroused and the effect produced.

In these and other ways, let the Church show itself to the young not as a severe governess laying down her lessons and resenting questions, but as a loving Mother old in years and experience and ever young at heart, encouraging her children to take her into their confidence, and rejoicing when they tell her frankly all that is in their minds. Pray, I beseech of you, during this Congress that the Spirit of Truth Who prompts this yearning for reality may give the Church grace to renew its youth so that it may win the trust and loyalty of the young, and inspire them with a vision of Christ as the Leader in Whose service is the perfect freedom.

Thirdly, there is the ardent and far-spread desire to give a spiritual basis to national, social and industrial life. It arises inevitably in the hearts of a generation which has seen a material conception of civilisation plunging the world into the most destructive war in history. It inspires the hopes, anxious but persistent, which surround the fortunes of the League of Nations. It speaks in the plea, almost pathetic in its daily repetition, that if there is to be peace and progress in industry a new spirit must come. When men think, they recognise that this new spirit cannot be created by, but must itself create, the outward system of national and industrial life, that it must come from "within," or (for the words mean the same thing) from "above." When they try to describe it, it is seen to be only, after all, the Spirit of Christ. Here, surely, is a movement

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springing from the Divine Spirit in the heart of man.

There are indeed persuasive voices urging that "the religion of the spirit" has no concern with the affairs of State and industries, that it calls us away from the things that are seen and temporal to the things that are unseen and eternal, to communion with God and citizenship in a heavenly city. It is a plea to which we do well to listen: for it brings a wholesome rebuke to a one-sided claim too often asserted or implied that the Kingdom of God is an earthly paradise. But it is apt itself to be one-sided. The religion of Christ is not only a religion of refuge. It is a religion of redemption. It is the religion of faith in a Divine Redeemer who came down from heaven and was incarnate—took upon Him the body and common life of man—in order that they might be transformed into the likeness of the Divine Ideal.

It is in truth but a meagre and one-sided mysticism which bids the soul retreat into "the city whose type is laid up in heaven" and dwell there in contemplation of its beauty. A truer and more virile mysticism would bid us rise indeed in heart and mind to that heavenly Jerusalem, but also descend with it out of heaven to earth and strive to guide the national and social life of man by its light. "Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land"—so this generation has learned to sing. Indeed the song has almost become another national anthem. Can we look upon the hope, the desire, which it breathes as a perversion of the true religion of the spirit? Must we not rather discern in it a

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movement of the Spirit of God in man, which the same Spirit calls upon the Church to welcome, to purify, to guide?

It is, indeed, a spiritual mission. Of course the Church has no mission to determine political or industrial affairs. Its sphere is the spirit. But the spirit is all-important. It must come first—not a sentiment or aspiration, but a primary principle of action. It is too late to invoke it when the course of politics and economics is already set, or when rival interests are already arrayed in combat. It must rule in the realm of motives and purposes which, far more than any so-called laws, is the spring from which political or economic action flows. We have to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and then all these things will be added to us—the things for which States and industries provide.

If then, in this longing for a spiritual basis of social life, the Divine Spirit is speaking from the heart of man, with what earnestness must we pray in this Congress, and always, that the same Spirit within the Church will take of the things of Christ and declare them to the citizens of this generation?

I crave your forgiveness for thoughts and words which are, I know, very unworthy of the great theme set before this Congress. Yet the leading thought which lies behind them, however imperfectly expressed, is one which, I am convinced, ought increasingly to fill the mind of the Church—the thought of the Eternal Spirit both moving with infinite patience among the thoughts and intents of

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men and also guiding the Church in each age to give the interpretation of the Gospel of Christ for which in that wide movement He creates the need, and prepares the way.

And, remember, it is not merely with a theme that we have to do. It is with a Person, a Person closer to us than breathing, ever waiting, if we will but wait upon Him, to manifest Himself in truth and light and power. Let us keep, through all our discussions, a reverent inward recollection of His Presence, a sustained expectation of His gifts. Then this assembly may be something greater far than another Congress—one of many which after a brief excitement have passed into oblivion. It may be another Pentecost, bringing some new and abiding power. From beginning to end let its aim be offered in the old and hallowed words:—

“Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire
And lighten with celestial fire.”

THE VERY REV. CHARLES L. WARR, M.A.

THE VERY REV. CHARLES L. WARR, M.A.

MR. WARR, who was born in 1892, is the second son of the late Rev. Alfred Warr, of Rosneath, a distinguished Scottish divine. He was educated at Glasgow Academy and the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, serving in the European War as a combatant officer. Dangerously wounded at Ypres in May, 1915, he was invalided out of the Army in 1916, and a year later was appointed an assistant minister at Glasgow Cathedral. From 1918 to 1926 he was minister of St. Paul's Parish Church, Greenock, and in February of the latter year was translated to St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, the premier pulpit of Scotland. In 1926 he received the additional appointments of Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland, Dean of the Order of the Thistle, and 'Extra Chaplain-in-Ordinary to His Majesty the King. He is the author of several books, among them being biographies of his father and of Principal John Caird, of Glasgow University.

SPIRITUAL POVERTY

THE VERY REV. CHARLES L. WARR, M.A.

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos iii, 3.

"I have called you friends." John xv, 15.

WHEREVER there is order, beauty, truth, there is harmony. Its basis is the complete agreement of the component parts which together form a perfect unity, whether in art or in life. You may perceive it in the sunrise or the sunset; in sculpture, poem, or musical symphony; where the celestial bodies revolve through the infinitudes of space; in the smoothly running machinery of an engine shop; in an ordered and disciplined human life. Harmony depends upon the adjustment of distinctive parts to a certain law or principle, and their consequent relation through that principle towards each other. When this relationship is violated discord comes. The unity is destroyed. The music of a serene and regular flow cracks and breaks. Wherever unity is, God is; wherever there is discord, God cannot be. For "He laid the key-note of all harmonies; He planned all perfect combinations."

"And wheresoever, in His rich creation,
Sweet music breathes—in wave, or bird, or soul,
'Tis but the faint and far reverberation
Of that great tune to which the planets roll."

SPIRITUAL POVERTY

II

The Kingdom of God, which our Lord consistently preached, was an ideal of ordered and harmonious social life which involved then, and unhappily still involves, a drastic revolution in the ordinary man's scale of values. It demanded, not as an academic theory, but as a living reality, the brotherhood of men. It struck at the roots of materialism and superseded not only class interests but geographical frontiers and racial distinctions. The gospel of the Kingdom insisted that each individual owed responsibility to the community, and through the community to mankind. Whether he liked it or not, man was commissioned by the God Who made him to be his brother's keeper. On this Jesus Christ was uncompromising.

In the light of His teaching it is not merely a certain section of contemporary political malcontents who are entitled to the name of Bolshevik. There are Bolsheviks in taste, in manners, in religion, indeed in every sphere of life where selfish irreflective people conduct themselves like moral anarchists and, flouting the canons of decent behaviour, act under the delusion that they can be a law unto themselves. And further. Our Lord laid His fearless hand upon the outward observances of religion, hallowed even with the antiquity of Moses. Temple, altar and ritual He declared only to be effective when they expressed the worship of God in terms of purest spiritual reality. On this basis He founded His Church. It was to be a holy

THE VERY REV. CHARLES L. WARR

society whose members would, by their moral and spiritual splendour, attract the world to their Master. The Church was to be the outward and visible expression of a family, a household of God, whose children discovered their highest experience of unity with each other and with their Lord in a definitely social act—the Blessed Sacrament of His Body and Blood. They were to be committed to Christ's interpretation of life as a glorious and heroic adventure of generous love and service. He charged them to show to the world a oneness of heart and purpose, so that the world would recognise them by their likeness to Himself. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Man cannot approach his Maker, much less can he walk with Him, unless man be agreed with God, and God with man. And if the revelation of Christ as to the nature and character of God be true, it simply means that our hearts, if God we seek to know, must throb in sympathy with the heart of the Divine. The vast machinery of collective human life derives its driving force from the same law of harmony which the pealing anthem owns. Society moves in peace and concord, or in the reverse, according as the lives of men are, or are not, adjusted in a true relation to the mind of God which Christ manifested as passionately desiring the fellowship of His children.

III

This fundamental law of Christian life which

conditions its harmony, I find to be summed up in that arresting and wistful expression of our Lord's: "I have called you friends." He did not say, "I have called you all to think exactly alike." Nor did He evidence our modern enthusiasm for hammering individuality down to the level of the mediocre. It is significant that whenever He said "Come, follow Me!"—as He did to widely divergent human types—people always did so, without apparently questioning the why or the wherefore. He obviously just drew them to Himself by the personal magnetism of His unique inward attractiveness. After His disappearance from the earth it was the same with the apostolic band. They were a heterogeneous mixture with many dangerous opposites. No system of doctrine united them, for they had formulated no creed. The conception of the Church, as now we know it, had not become concrete to hold them all together. But the little society was cemented by the personal attractiveness of its members, the attractiveness of characters sweetened and made beautiful by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

They were people of strong and varied opinions. They argued and disputed, and what they taught was not infrequently subject to dissimilarities, which occasionally gave rise to friction. As to temperament, that perilous quantity, each was different from the other. Some were hot-headed and hot-blooded, some were clever and some were dull, some severely practical and some contemplative and theoretical. This, of course, since they were human,

caused at times a heavy strain upon their fellowship, but no clash of tongues or opinions, however heated, ever succeeded in obliterating their consciousness of Christ's presence with them. They might think along different lines, cherish individual preferences, pursue their own peculiar ideals—and, after all, it is man's duty to be the first edition of himself—but they were and remained friends in Jesus Christ. They could live and work together because they were agreed in Him. The irresistible attractiveness of the bright-souled young Hero who was their Master, which was a magnetism of sheer glorious personality, drew the disciples to Him and so entirely changed them that it drew them to each other.

And that is the power which draws men still to Christ, and through Him draws them to their brethren. No bitterness or animosity can live if and when we remember Him—His moral beauty, His great forgiving heart, His sacrifice and love. "I have called you friends." From meanness, pettiness, and all things unworthy, that holy message, echoing from the quiet fields of Galilee, through the corridors of history, ever brings us to our senses. The first effect of an allegiance to the Lord is the deliberate subjection of the unlovely elements in our nature and the exaltation of the fair and good. Touched by His Spirit men and women became personally attractive in the truest sense; because they have companied with Christ they come to imitate His ways. United with Him, even here amid the transitory scenes of place and time, they begin to breathe the atmosphere of worlds immortal.

SPIRITUAL POVERTY

Their character expands because they readjust their scale of values in the light of the infinite and eternal. The crying need of many well-meaning people is thus to try to become more attractive Christians.

IV

This, I am persuaded, is the gospel which our squabbling and turbulent age has largely forgotten, and in which alone lies the hope of its regeneration. In education and scientific achievement we may be going from strength to strength, but the drab poverty of our souls is shamed by the very greatness of our works. The classes and the nations fight and wrangle, and the condition of our own national household, to say nothing of the human family, towards which we have our obligations, is a disgrace to a Christian country. But it is not the differences of opinion and divergences of religious and political thought that create the sordid mess of social injustice, class hatreds, wrongs and suffering which cast a blight upon our era. It is the suspicion, the greed, the selfishness that blaspheme that friendship to which Christ called His followers. These have created the barriers between man and man, class and class, and have degraded the noble ideal of nationality into the mere symbol of an armed camp.

Uniformity is a dreary business. There is no uniformity in nature. No two human beings, no

two stars, no two flowers in all the universe has the great Designer made wholly alike. Nor do I believe that uniformity of mind among men is desired by the mind of God. It is diversity of view, opposition of ideas, conflict of intelligences that constitute the power station which generates the force which drives into motion the machinery of corporate life. It is opinion striking against opinion that sends forth the sparks which ignite the lamp of truth. I want to see the union of the Churches, but a union which will enable each distinctive type to preserve its own individuality. I do not want to see the extinction of the party system in political life, for political opposition has always in the long run been for the good of the State. Indeed, I should dread the day when intellectual conviction would sink to the stagnation of an unreal and ignoble peace. Those who cry for a Cromwellian dictator to quell our present troubles but champion an ignorant futility. Nay, our need is not to sink our differences, after the advice of so many of our garrulous advisers. It is earnestly to distinguish between prejudice and principle, and, loyal to our convictions, to attune them with our neighbour's on the key-note of sympathetic understanding and Christian love ; so that our curses may turn to blessings and our bitter rancours into music ; so that the barricades will be lowered sufficiently that across them we may look into a brother's eyes, and reach out to clasp a brother's hand.

In logic you are taught that contraries laid together appear the more evident. It follows that from

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honest controversy what is false will appear more false, what is true more true. But Christian people ought to know, what some of our mischief-makers do not want to know, that what matters about their opinions is not that they happen to constitute their point of view, but whether their point of view happens to be Christ's point of view. To attack our brethren or invade their sacred rights, to thwart them in their legitimate efforts, to incite them to hatreds, to cherish towards them senseless dislikes because of selfish motives actuated by class, or sectional, or personal coveteousness—that is alien to the mind of Christ. We have, indeed, as Christians, no right to support any view, political, social, or religious, unless we have taken scrupulous care thoroughly to convince ourselves that its practical operation would be calculated to further the best interests of mankind. “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness” is a policy difficult enough even for the best of us ; but it is the obstacles and hardship of the Christian life that constitute an appeal to all that is chivalrous and heroic in human nature. The peacemakers—the most difficult rôle of all—shall be called the children of God.

V

Can two walk together, except they be agreed ?
We cannot fulfil our chief end, which is to glorify God, unless our spirits be in harmony with the

spirit of Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. "I have called you friends." And the unity of friendship is not necessarily that of opinion, but most necessarily that of heart. If this be ours our differences need not divide us, nor our controversies leave us unkind. If we take life with any measure of gravity, and if we are sincere, we will find that to whatever religious or political party we belong our common idealism is centred in a great historic fact, namely, the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ and all that it implies for the collective life of mankind. From that Cross we go our several ways, and our paths must diverge. In the task of applying its healing power to a troubled world we will not all act or think alike. But in one acknowledgment at least we are at one—that at best we are but blundering sinful men and women with souls to be saved and sins to be forgiven, and there is only one Saviour who can do it. We know, too, that only when our wayward lives are brought into harmony with His righteous will and loving heart can they ever know peace or be at rest.

Not only from our sins do we need salvation, but from our ignorance and silly pride, from our bigotries and uninformed animosities. We need forgiveness for the manner in which we degrade those minds given us by God with which to think, and those hearts He has bestowed on us with which to love. The world with its tragedies is proof enough that much has failed us on which we fondly relied. Well, the Galilean still remains Who has claimed that His words abide though earth and heaven pass away.

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The deeper he plunges into the quagmire of catastrophe, the more man is forced to retrace his steps to seek the way that leadeth unto life. And the classes and the masses, and the nations and the churches will eventually be compelled to realise that they can only walk in safety when they learn to walk together as friends in Him who is the Friend of man.

VI

Let us hope that from the strife and tumult of our generation we may learn this wisdom. The Church has to learn that the better ambition is not to become stronger with more authority, but better with more humility. The nations have to learn that a country finds security and more than transient glory only in proportion to the moral greatness of its people and the extent which they are willing to serve the world. Commerce and industry have to learn that Christianity demands as an elementary principle that a trade's, or an industry's, first function is to perform an act of service to the community, and only when this is honestly fulfilled has it a justification to be a money-making concern. We average individuals have to learn that though we may be entitled to legitimate profits, aspirations and ambitions, it is not we who count ; since " the ship is more than the crew."

There are signs that the ears of this groping, disillusioned generation are turning to listen to that

cry across the ages : “ I have called you friends.” If Christendom can but be faithful to its trust a day will come, in God’s good time, when the praises which men raise to Him will be not only with their lips but in their lives, and when they will worship in a reality we have never known ; when in a Society delivered from the love of luxury and the pursuit of vanity, and in a common life freed from selfish rivalries and mellowed with the love and friendship of Jesus Christ, not alone in these temples where His honour dwelleth but in every place shall be lifted in truth the hymn of adoration—“ All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting.”

THE BISHOP OF ABERDEEN AND ORKNEY

THE BISHOP OF ABERDEEN AND ORKNEY
(*The Right Rev. Frederic Llewellyn Deane, D.D.*).

DR. DEANE is the son of the Rev. Francis Hugh Deane, late Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. He was educated at Keble College, Oxford, and graduated with theological honours. He was curate of Kettering, Northants, from 1891 to 1900; Vicar of St. Andrew's, Leicester, and Chaplain of H.M. Prison from 1900 to 1904; Rector of St. Mary's, Glasgow, from 1904 to 1906, and Provost of St. Mary's Cathedral from 1906 to 1917. The University of Glasgow conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Divinity (*honoris causa*) in 1909. He was elected and consecrated Bishop of Aberdeen and Orkney in 1917.

FOLLOWERS OF GOD

THE RIGHT REV. FREDERIC L. DEANE, D.D., Bishop
of Aberdeen and Orkney

*“ But Jesus called them unto Him and said :
Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it
over them, and their great ones exercise authority
over them. Not so shall it be among you. But
whosoever would become great among you shall
be your minister, and whosoever would be first
among you shall be your servant ; even as the
Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but
to minister, and to give His life, a ransom for
many.”* Matt. xx, 25.

THAT saying is among the great master-words of Jesus Christ. It sums up and focuses within itself a large part of His teaching concerning the Way of Life. And it stands for all time as an indubitable and searching test of the reality of discipleship. On our acceptance or rejection of this saying as a guiding principle of our thoughts, our feelings and our actions in relation to our fellow-men depends the question whether in any vital sense we are Christians or no.

For whatever else being a Christian may mean, it always must involve that on our low level, and

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according to our measure, there is some real community of spirit, identity of aim, conformity of action with Jesus Christ. There never can be any dispensation from that precept: "Have this mind in you which also was in Christ Jesus." There never can be any avoidance of that stern test: "Now if any man hath not the spirit of Christ he is none of His."

I

When Nietzsche uttered his blasphemous and bitter invectives against the teaching of Jesus Christ, when he exclaimed: "I call Christianity the one great curse, the one enormous, innermost perversion, the one immortal blemish of mankind," we may be shocked at the violence of his hatred and contempt for ideals and precepts which he regarded as fit only for weaklings and for cowards and for slaves; but at least we can regard him as honest and sincere.

What can be said of a state, a social order, or individual men and women, claiming to be Christian, and taking as their banner the banner of the Cross; and at the same time in all practical affairs deriding Christ, and tramping His teachings in the mud, admiring what He bids us shun, and despising what He bids us love? It is this which presents to men and angels the sorry tragedy of our failure and our shame.

It is possible for us, like Nietzsche and many others allied with him in thought, to conceive of

the Christian Religion as a profound mistake, a wrong turning in the march of life, a blind alley leading to decadence and defeat, the loss of those types most virile and most distinguished in humanity, the survival of types weakest and most unfit. But at least it is utterly impossible to be in doubt as to what it is for which the Christian Revelation stands, and the God to whom Christians are committed, and whom they are pledged to follow as the Captain of their souls.

For in the Christian Revelation the splendour of God is His humility, and the unwearying and self-emptying service which He bestows on every creature He has made. In our blindness we may break the second commandment, setting up a false image of the Godhead in our minds, picturing God falsely as some Sultan of the "Arabian Nights" multiplied millions of times over in majesty and power, reigning in isolated splendour in His celestial palace beyond the shining of the stars. But the Christian God is, as the old Mystics rightly taught, full homely, and full courteous, and free to all. The Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens may not be able to contain Him, but there is always room enough for Him in the heart of the littlest child. Superior persons may pride themselves on their superiority, which they estimate by counting the number of persons they can look down on and despise. But God is too great for this petty snobbery; He despises nothing; He treats all His creatures with reverence and respect. The "superman" may sit disdainful in his self-conscious power, master of men and things, and bid

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the common people wash his feet. But God thinks it no shame to wash His creatures' feet. He is always the *servus servorum*. Always and everywhere throughout all time and space He waits upon His creatures with the towel and the basin in His hands, serving them with a loving care. Satan is arrogant and proud, and pride and self-assertion make the atmosphere of Hell. God is humble, and Heaven is Heaven because the spirit of humility and service reign there supreme.

II

As Christians we are irretrievably committed to that estimate of the character of God, for the dogma of the Incarnation is the very basis of our Faith. And the dogma of the Incarnation commits us to the belief that once in time and space it really happened that He who fills all things, and who transcends all things, and in whom all things consist, revealed Himself in human character and human life; that Jesus Christ is the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His Person. Men may dispute on this point and on that in the region of our holy Faith, and perhaps they will go on disputing to the end of time; but nobody ever argues about the character of Jesus Christ, this character which reflects the character of God as a still pool reflects the sky. We see Him in the Gospels, this Son of Man, so simple that the smallest

child can understand and love Him ; so great that while His feet are on the earth His head is above the stars, and all the love of this poor world of ours is only a little broken echo of the beating of His heart. We see Him stretching His arms wide to the whole human race, shutting out of His love, His fellowship, His understanding sympathy, nothing that breathes the breath of life or wears the form of man. We see Him always the strong, kind elder brother of the weakest woman, the most sinful man, the smallest child ; always at home with all men, always accessible, always the servant of all ; never patronising anybody, never assuming a condescending air, never conscious of any barrier built by education, class or birth, never treating even social outcasts with contempt. This is the revelation of the character of God. And it is correspondence with this character which is the test of the reality of our Christian profession both in our social order and in our ideals of state and empire, and in our personal and private life.

Can we in any measure, however faulty and imperfect, answer to the call to be " followers of God," and to " have that mind in us which also was in Christ Jesus " ? This is the supreme question of our age. The Great War was a judgment which fell upon peoples who raised temples to Christ's honour at every corner of the streets while in all their policies and practical affairs they made pride, self-seeking and aggression their rule of life. These tragic years which have elapsed since the ending of the war, years compared with which the war itself

was happiness, have witnessed the dismal spectacle of peoples seeking Utopia without any change of heart. Never since history began has mankind passed through so unparalleled an experience of disillusionment and disappointment and disgust. The shores of life are littered with the wreckage of our shattered hopes and dreams. Still the world is like some vast seething cauldron, like the cauldron of the witches in Macbeth, bubbling over with the suspicions and the hatreds and the savage discontents of men, bubbling over with unrest, and seething on its surface with a poisonous evil-smelling scum : "Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble." As the sons of the prophets cried to Elisha in the old Bible tale, we well may cry : "O man of God, there is death in the pot." And there is no antidote to the poison in the pot of human life, no remedy or cure, save the way of Jesus Christ, both in world politics and in our national and social life.

III

In our Imperialism, whether we will or no, we are being driven towards the way of Christ. No longer is that spirit possible which, in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, seemed almost an echo of the boast : "Is not this great Babylon which I have built by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty." We cannot, indeed, disown the wonder of the greatness of the Empire, the vast sweep

of its far-reaching influence, which has spread like the onrush of a resistless tide across the seas, the islands and the continents of the world. We cannot disown the destiny which God has laid upon our race. But we are learning that it is utterly impossible in these days to fulfil that destiny in the spirit or by the methods of empires in the past. The war has not created a new heaven, but it has created a new and most perplexing earth, and presented problems which hardly the wisest minds and most generous hearts can solve. All the East has wakened from its agelong sleep. Even the child races of the world are stirring. Everywhere racialism and nationalism are aflame. Doubtless equality is impossible and contrary to the nature of things. Doubtless colour bars are real barriers which no facile Christian sentimentalism can brush upon one side. But one thing is certain—the arrogance and the domination of bygone days must go! The self-seeking and the exploitation of bygone days must go. Our greatness must be the greatness of those who serve. Our claim to leadership must be established by virtue of our wide and understanding sympathy, our unselfish and unwearied care for the welfare of those we lead.

In our social order, whether we will or no, we are being driven towards the way of Jesus Christ. We know there is much more to be learned than mere hatred of Communism from the dark story of the Russian Revolution, which has fouled the stream of history and smirched the honour of the human race with its bestial and revolting crimes. We know

that these horrors never could have happened if the more fortunate classes in Russia in former days had lived to serve their fellow-men instead of becoming slaves to "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life." We recognise that while it may be well to abominate the Communistic creed, a thousand times over it is better to take to heart the warning, and to remember what is the real danger to our civilisation and who are the real enemies of our national and social life. For the real danger which threatens us, infinitely more dangerous than all the attacks aimed at us from outside and all the Communistic influences in our midst, comes from the provocation of the flaunting of a vulgar wealth; from those enemies of society who commit the meanest and most despicable of thefts, taking everything from the common good to gratify their desires, and putting nothing back; from those who live to spend, and not to serve; from those who denounce class consciousness in the labourer and the artisan, while they are guilty of class consciousness themselves in its most insolent and aggressive form. Fellowship, sympathy, service, the mind of Christ, even if it be some poor broken gleam of His pure Spirit brought into our national and social life, we know full well would be sufficient to heal our bitterest divisions and to dispel the worst dangers of our time.

At least we can help the world by practising the teaching in our own daily life. There is no pride of caste with God. All who will may come to Him. He is free and accessible to all. Are we patronising or

despising any of our fellow-creatures? Are we giving way to superior and consequential airs? Are we building up barriers of division between ourselves and our brethren, barriers built by pride of race, pride of birth, pride of education, pride of wealth, pride of position, barriers framed by the Devil for the hindering of God's loving purpose for the world? God is the servant of all. He reigns because He serves. He is the greatest because He serves the most. Do we realise that true life can only be interpreted in terms of service, that in service alone lies its dignity, its meaning, and its worth? Do we realise that a life lived for pleasure, for ease, for selfish ambitions and self-seeking aims, is in the clear light of Heaven a sordid and a shameful life, which no culture and refinement can redeem. For the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life sink ever down to rottenness and death. Time, who is God's scavenger and the dustman of the Universe, sweeps all our pride and selfishness away into the dustbin of the void. That only which corresponds to God, however faulty may be that correspondence, is that which can endure. "The world passes away and the lust thereof, but he who doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

W. T. GRENFELL, M.D., C.M.G., F.R.C.S.

DR. WILFRED THOMASON GRENFELL
C.M.G. 1906; *M.D. Oxford*; *M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P. London*; *J.P. Colony of Newfoundland*.
 Son of Algernon Sydney and Jane Georgina Grenfell. Educated at Marlborough, Oxford and London Hospital, where he was House Surgeon to Sir Frederick Treves, Bart. He fitted out the first hospital ship for the North Sea fisheries, and cruised with the fishermen from the Bay of Biscay to Iceland; established homes for them on the land, and arranged mission vessels for them at sea. Came to Labrador 1892, where he built four hospitals, a series of co-operative stores, an orphanage and a school, and started numerous small industrial schemes. In 1912 opened in St. John's, Newfoundland, the King George the Fifth Seamen's Institute, the money for the erection of which he had raised during the previous ten years. Hon. Fellowship of the College of Surgeons of America, 1915; Major in the Harvard Surgical Unit in France; Hon. LL.D. Williams' College, 1909; Hon. M.A. Harvard University, 1909; Hon. M.D. Toronto University, 1911; received Murchison Bequest, Royal Geographical Society, 1911; Fellow of Royal College of Surgeons, 1920; Gold Medal of National Academy of Social Sciences of America, 1920. Publications: "Adrift on a Pack of Ice," "A Man's Faith," "The Harvest of the Sea," "Off the Rocks," "Labrador, 1910," "Down to the Sea," "Down North on the Labrador," "The Adventure of Life," "Immortality," "Autobiography of a Labrador Doctor," 1919, "Tales of the Labrador," "Labrador Days," 1921. Dr. Grenfell is also Master Mariner.

AS I SEE IT

WILFRED THOMASON GRENFELL, M.D., C.M.G., F.R.C.S.

“Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Matt. iv, 19.

EVERY thinking man sooner or later seems somehow to find himself facing the Christ, and at least having the opportunity to think what He means to him, and whether He means anything. Anyone, who considers life, has realised how short man's stay on earth is, and how inevitable the incident of death is in every life, even if it is an unimportant incident. It is then that a sort of uneasy feeling overtakes one, that Christ somehow makes some demand of him, and that he ought to think it over and settle it.

The *one* thing Christ seemed to be asking me, when I came to that moment in my life, was : “Have you the courage to follow Me.” No doubt many men are unconscious that they have ever come to a crisis of this kind, and yet have somehow imbibed that spirit of the Master, which makes them follow Him, and so entitles them to be called Christians, whether they like it or not or, whether they label it or not. Thus, for example, we always have working with us men and women of all kinds of affiliation, or of no affiliation, serving in almost every capacity just for the love of it. Some of these have worked

hard to get enough money to come and give what might be called menial (really manual) service, even for a short time ; and then have told me that they must go and earn more to come back and repeat the experiment. Actually most of these have only afterwards found out that it was the leadership of Christ visualised unconsciously somehow, that had brought them to what superficially might be regarded as " making sacrifices for the sake of others."

I

As I read the life of Christ at twenty years of age, when owing to the arresting word of a preacher, which I heard in a tent in Shadwell, East London, I for the first time studied the Gospels carefully, I marked down, all along the margins of the pages, as I always do still, my deductions as to what I thought He meant to me. When the book was filled up I presented it, by request, to a museum in Boston, Massachusetts, where it is now. I never keep the copies after they become fully marked up, because I have learnt by actual comparison that my deductions keep steadily differing from those of the museum copy, and of all preceding ones. By this I have learned that I am not infallible at any one time, and that everyone who disagrees with me need not therefore necessarily be wrong. I have learnt the futility of arguing *de haut en bas*, if achieving any objective or doing constructive work like Christ did, is one's real intention. As a result I have never

made the way in which another man interprets, what this crisis results in for him intellectually, any criterion as to whether I will accept him as a fellow worker for the objective which I set before myself in 1884. For my own part I know there are times when faith even in the value of life itself is hard to hold to—its infinite dignity and opportunity as Knights of God on a field of honour seems at times impossible to believe. Then one sees the strength of the man who is satisfied, whatever his faith or unfaith is at the moment, to just “do each day the thing that pleases Him.” Somehow, I do not think that Christ insisted on anyone believing in Him intellectually, or that He gave us any reason to suppose that an accurate intellectual estimate of what He (Christ) came to earth for, would commend anyone to God.

The older I grow, and the more I compare what He seems now to be saying every day with my own reactions, drawn from the lives of every class of man, rich and poor, well-informed and uninformed, self-conquered or self-indulgent, on land or on sea, the more I am convinced that my teachers were wrong to try to tell me that we had “nothing to do because it was all done for us.” (That is the negation of any meaning to our life on earth.) My own deductions to-day more than ever convince me that what we do, small as it is, is of the utmost importance to Him, and that He came to earth largely to show us what things we can do that are pleasing to God, and by doing them Himself challenge us to follow Him, and so find the “meaning”

or "light of life." He knew that which Science has only discovered since radio activity gave us a new vision of this earth and discovered the world of the spirit, viz. : that we in human frames never know more than a rigidly limited amount. Our knowledge of the earth should always be called faith—it never can be anything else, and He knew it. He was much more concerned with challenging us as sons of God, by following Him to help bring a new Kingdom of God on earth, than with arguing about our intellectual attitudes. This is what our teachers meant, possibly, when they spoke of "Believing in Him." I hope so, anyhow. The word believe means "live by." That He never did mean we should either be "cast out" because we did not recognise Him, or that we could understand Him before we followed Him, is certain, because He asked *everybody* to "Follow Me," and none of those who first followed Him did understand Him, and considering that they all ran away it is a question whether any of them really believed more in Him than Thomas did. Our vision of this meaning of Christ's challenge has united us absolutely in Labrador in work, and then in seeking that strength, that we all admit we need, beyond our own, if we are even distantly "to do to-day what He would do in our place," and if we are to believe that we may go out and preach the Gospel of the Grace of God without any other qualifications to be labelled Christian so far as our mental convictions go, than this willingness to follow, which He said would win faith for us. Jesus said definitely to Judas Iscariot :

“Go out and preach the Gospel.” His explanation of this seems to me to be: “If we follow Him we shall have, or find, the light of life.” I have known preachers, professional preachers, who have been paid to preach all their lives, and yet could not conscientiously claim ever to have been “fishers of men.” The contrary is also our experience, viz., that no self-indulgent or selfish man, even with any amount of degrees or labels crediting him as a Christian, has any real power just by talking to recreate men—this life we can give—but not by might or power but only by His spirit manifested in our own following of Him. Who would lend a man a five-pound note because he had a D.D. or was called a Christian? Who would, to-day, be led to lay down his life by any mere talking, if the preacher did not do from day to day the things that Christ would do in his place? “What a man is speaks so loud,” says Emerson, “that you cannot even hear what he says.” A statement that grows truer every day. On the contrary Christ says: “Follow Me and ye shall be made a fisher of men.”

II

I can only say that I have been lifted out of myself and nearer to God, and got a clearer vision of what God means to human life, many many times in schooners' fo'castles or in Labrador cottages than I have in any cathedral or other preaching place.

Take this example : One night in a Labrador house I was trying to work out what the father and the mother of a large family of children could do to fend off starvation during the winter. Their last barrel of flour had been opened. It was then only early in November, and they had nothing in sight for winter in the way of food, except what they could shoot or trap, till June should come round again. Not long before a man further north, late in the spring, with his family starving, had driven out his wife and eldest son to go south and seek a neighbour who might feed them. He had then killed his small children with an axe, and shot himself. Even as I sat in the cottage a knock came at the door, and my friend went out into the entrance porch, and I heard him talking to a neighbour. I then distinctly heard him ladling out flour from his barrel into a baking tin that the neighbour had brought. "What were you doing, Tom," I asked him when he came back. "I was lending Uncle George a pan of flour," he said. "Is he out of it already?" I inquired. "Yes, he is," was the reply. I then asked him: "Will he ever pay you back?" And he said: "I do not think so, I do not think he can." I asked: "Then why do you do it when your children are already hungry?" The man looked into my face and said simply: "What would *you* do, doctor?" On another occasion a poor fisherman, who had taken me across a bay to see a dying man, apologised when at last I got to his house cold and wet, because the hot tea that he offered me had neither sugar or milk. There were several

children in the room partly grown up, and miserably clad. In the attic I found an old fisherman dying of cancer of the throat, and his old wife, blind with cataract, crooning from her broken heart over the partner of her life. After doing what I could I came down the ladder that served for the stairs and asked my friend whether this was his father. "Only a neighbour," he replied. "How long has he been in your house," I asked. He replied that the man had been there about a year. I said: "Do they pay anything for their food?" "They have nothing to pay." I then asked him: "Why do you do it, seeing that you and your children are so much in need." The man looked into my face and said the same thing: "What would *you* do, doctor?" Those are the preachers who appeal to the youth of all ages, but especially of to-day, viz. the men who do things. If increasing experience gives increasing wisdom, as I try to write down what I think Christ asks each individual of to-day, it is to do the thing that pleases Him. To have courage to follow him and leave intellectual faith to be won by experience—of long, hard and expensive experience—but to be won in the good fight, as every worth while acquisition of man must be. The humility of modern Science is a greater marvel than even its wonderful achievements. Humility, not infallibility, is the note that the man of to-day responds to. Life is not a tragedy, it is a field of honour. What the Christ's teaching leads me to do for Him is the gauge I shall be judged by. It is unquestionably the gauge by which men appraise any claim to

the title Christian. What Christ seems to be asking me for every time is not comprehension but apprehension, not belief but courage. His religion is not the mean emotion that seeks to save itself, but that ennobling one which in willingly laying down life for others finds its own salvation.

REV. F. R. BARRY, D.S.O., M.A.

REV. FRANK RUSSELL BARRY, D.S.O., M.A.

EDUCATED at Bradfield and Oriel College, Oxford, of which he was a scholar; took first classes in Mods. and Greek, and was a Liddon Student; elected to a Fellowship at Oriel in 1913. He served in the War as a Chaplain, and after the Armistice was appointed by the Archbishops Principal of the Ordination Test School for Ex-service Men at Knutsford. In 1923 he was elected Professor of N.T. Exegesis in King's College, London.

CHRIST THE ARCHITECT.*

REV. F. R. BARRY, D.S.O., M.A., Professor in King's
College, London

THIS Cathedral is a Prophecy in stone. It speaks in the name of Christ to the Great City. Its stones "cry out," urgent with a Gospel. What is its challenge and its good news to Liverpool? We can find it in well-known New Testament imagery—"a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye are also builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. ii, 21, 22).

St. Paul pictures the Christian Society in the likeness of a great building. In it the eternal and creative Spirit clothes itself in a living design, and each part and detail is subordinate to the plan and purpose of the whole. It is not for nothing that almost from the first the Gospel has expressed itself in architecture. There is an essential kinship between them. It has, indeed, often been pointed out what large tracts of life there are which seem to receive no sanction or recognition in the recorded teaching of the Master. There is, for example, hardly a single word about the whole kingdom of Literature and Art. Yet there is preserved among His sayings

* A sermon preached in Liverpool Cathedral on the occasion of the First Anniversary of the Consecration.

one piece of definitely æsthetic criticism. It concerned a triumph of architecture—the magnificent new Temple at Jerusalem, forty and six years in the building, flashing out in its gold and marble on the summit of the holy hill, dominating the whole panorama of the city as they saw it from the Mount of Olives, as indeed the glorious Dome of the Rock does still. “See, Master,” they said, “how splendid it all is! What manner of stones and what buildings are here!” He answered: “Yes, but it is doomed. There shall not be left one stone upon another.” He detected something hollow in it all. He felt that the art of it was not sincere: it was not a real and vital expression of the true spirit of Religion. It was, after all, but a monarch’s *tour de force*, part of a self-conscious renaissance carried through by the Idumean Herod. For our Lord it symbolised that unreality which was destroying the soul of His people, and He knew that this spiritual decadence must bring them to inevitable destruction. “There shall not be left one stone upon another which shall not be cast down.”

All architecture that is great grows out of the life of a people, the symbol and expression of its spirit. It satisfies only if we feel that in it the soul of a faith or a people is expressed. The great Mosques of Cairo, for example, seem in their space, their shadow, their austerity, their restraint and speaking emptiness, to be the perfect expression of Islam—obedience to the sheer will of Allah. Or the great Cathedrals of the Middle Ages enshrine, as everyone must recognise, the manifold riches, the fears and

aspirations of the tumultuous mediæval spirit. But so soon as the artist gets out of touch with the heart and life of the people whom he serves, so soon is his work mannered, lifeless, meaningless. That is easily seen if you contrast, for instance, the Tudor cottages and manor houses, growing out the life of Tudor society, with the artificial and class-conscious mansions devised by eighteenth century elegance, or the devastating and pretentious ugliness of the big town houses of the 1850's. Yet there is scarcely a village in the land but has in its parish church a monument of the true soul of the English people. All art that is specifically Christian has on it at least this imprint of sincerity: for it springs from an experience of life which is in contact with Reality.

This Cathedral of yours is the creative symbol of your civic life in its spiritual aspect. It is as it were the soul of your city speaking to the world through great art. You would not claim that every citizen lives consciously or lives always at this level. But it may be claimed as the symbol and expression of what this manifold and crowded life is, in its inmost purpose, seeking after. It is a spiritual interpretation of civic and economic effort—a witness to the eternal background of the life of common day and its real worth and significance.

Life around us seems at first attempt too complex and too baffling to explain. If we watch the life of a great city as it passes by in streets and clubs and offices, it seems to defy all our interpretations. Pathos and comedy, joy and bitterness, brutality and high idealism, all inextricably mingle. There

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is all this vast mass of men and women, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, each life bearing its own secret, all of them going about their business, each seeking some purpose of his own, yet all apparently at cross-purposes. They seem to have no conscious aim in common, and often they come into conflict and collision. Is there any sense to be made of all this? Is there any clue or principle by which to interpret this bewildering scene? Only if we can relate it to *one* goal. The human drama has in truth no meaning except in so far as we succeed in relating all of it to God.

Or turn the eye inwards. Question life within us as we know it in our individual selves. Here again we find the same problem. It too is a tangle of conflicting impulses, so hurried, so distracted, so unquiet—a hundred tasks, a hundred hopes and fears, so seldom harmonised or unified. What is the innermost meaning of this my life? Where is the intimate and essential self? Again, there is no clue, no inner peace, save in so far as this striving, seeking self is centred in the reality of God, and finds its selfhood as it finds its place in the divine purpose for the world. Without the unseen and eternal values this life of ours is but a feverish dream. It must be interpreted by the Eternal. That is what we are here to say to-night. To relate life, in all its breadth and range, to God and the purposes of God—that, in its essence, *is* Religion. To relate life to God whose character is revealed to us in Christ Jesus, and to live it in the spirit of the Master—that is the Christian religion.

We shall find it true, if we look back on history, that Religion has always been a social thing, an activity of men not as individuals, but in families and tribes and nations. And I doubt if religion can mean much to-day save as the consecration and enrichment of a corporate striving after the highest values. That is worship, in its fullest sense. Our conception of worship needs to be amplified. In itself it is surely the spontaneous blossom of a life that is aspiring Godwards. It expresses itself in a score of different ways. The artist, stung with the splendour of his vision, the researcher with his austere recognition of the majesty of truth, the mother seeing God in the eyes of her child, the reformer opening his heart to the burning passion of peace and social justice, the saint in breathless adoration before the revelation of Love crucified—all these in their diverse ways are worshipping. They are beholding life in terms of God. But, for all of them, worship is the flower of a life rooted in a God-willed purpose. Get the directive purpose of life true, and the worship naturally and freely follows. But always it is a function of *life*. True prayer is dominant desire: where the treasure is, there the heart is also. And worship is bound to be weak and sentimental unless it is organically related to a will bent on some actual good purpose. We cannot rightly worship God as Truth, unless we are seeking to discover truth about some definite and concrete problem. We can only adore Him of the Broken Body if the cup of our life too is being poured out in the attempt to serve His broken

brethren. And it is a weakness of the Church to-day that we tend to isolate the "institutional" from this practical aspect of religion. The "devotional life" springs out of the heart of work. But we make Church-going, Prayer and Sacraments duties to be performed in their own right, unrelated, too often, to the tasks of life. This, in the end, is to offer men religion without any defined content, with no definite aim and goal in purposive *action*. This is really to start at the wrong end, and to rob religion of its greatness. For it leaves religion and worship in the air, cut off from those other spiritual activities—art, education, industry, science, politics—which it ought to unify and inspire. But we ought first to point men to those values in which the Nature of God is expressed, which it is Man's privilege to realise; and *then* to the eternal springs of power, and to God in whom all values are fulfilled. That is worship in reality and truth.

We cannot acquiesce in any view which would make religion just a department of life, side by side with our other activities. It embraces the ends of all right endeavour. It is *an attitude to life as a whole*—the total response to life and all its problems of those who know that the things which are temporal find their meaning only in the eternal. It is to offer and dedicate life to God at every point of human contact with it.

The Cathedral stands for this ampler conception. It should symbolise the gathering into one, in reverent, glad recognition of the Highest, of all the good and precious things in life, and consecrate men's

striving after them. It stands for time as the "image of Eternity."

Heaven lies about us whether we will or no. This life of ours is shrouded about with mystery. There are reaches and depths in experience for all of us which pass man's understanding. That, too, a great building like this tells us. Its mass, its upward soar, its lights and shadows, forbid attempts to sum up human life in the glib formulas of common sense. The more we know of the world, the more we see that the simplest things pass over into the infinite. We must see life in its widest horizons, must apprehend the length and breadth and depth and height. God's ways, when all is said, are not as our ways. . . .

And yet, the Infinite in the heart of man knows itself *at home* in our world. For it is the world of Our Father. Religion, for us, is no mere baffled groping into the dark where human thought is lost. It is contact with Reality. It is co-operation with a Father's will. "I have not called you slaves," it was said, "but friends"—not bond-slaves, working underground at the bidding of a tyrant whose will they can neither share nor understand, but friends working in daylight with a Friend, sharing through the Son the Father's plan. Think how much the familiar words imply!

We have come, in the long story of our race, to a new stage of evolution. We are living now in a new era, the era of conscious control over environment, of deliberate co-operation with the laws of life, as sons and daughters of God. This was perhaps

what St. Paul saw in the distance when he spoke of creation travailing in pain, waiting for the revelation of the sons of God. For as many, he said, as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Rom. viii, 14, 19-23). The Christ, the Word, the Purpose of Creation, has been revealed to us in Jesus, giving us the right to become the sons of God, if we will accept Him in the disciple's spirit. That is the very charter of our faith. And surely it means no merely pious feelings, but deliberate and disciplined endeavour to bring the world and the life of men within it into accord with that divine purpose, at once creative and redemptive, into true line with those laws of life which are the thoughts of God. At every point since Man appeared on earth he *has* "interfered" with the world about him and influenced the course of evolution. We can influence it now decisively. More and more the secrets of our Universe are yielding to human importunity. More and more we are learning every day of the nature of things and the structure of our world. Science to-day is God's prophet, and He is revealing Himself and His ways to us with a fulness earlier ages never dreamed of. Prophets and kings have desired to see the things which we see in our day and have not seen them. Power is being put into our hands which it is almost frightening to contemplate. How are we going to use this trust? In the spirit of sonship or as the devil's tools? We can, if we will—if we do not repent we shall—destroy civilisation altogether. We can, if we will, bring it into harmony with the eternal

purpose of the Father. Nature is only controlled by obeying her; and the more we learn the more plain, I think, becomes the supremacy of spiritual forces.

Our world is dying for lack of a thought-out plan, of an ample and true philosophy of life in the light of which we can harmonise all our strivings in the service of a coherent scheme. The revelation in Christ gives to us the revelation of the meaning of life and the spirit and power in which we can rise to the height of it. That is religion—the call heard, accepted and acted out in life, to co-operate in mind and will with the creative purpose of the world, as sons responding to the Heavenly Father, and in fellowship with one another.

This task your Cathedral crowns and consecrates. This is the Christian moral leadership which it offers to a distracted world. It is not enough to say “follow Jesus.” To copy Jesus is not the Christian ethic; it is to translate His spirit into action—a thing far more costly and more exacting. The life of our Lord on earth was limited by His own time and place and circumstances. It is His *spirit* that controls history, and gives us a permanent and victorious attitude to the problem of life and its due response to God.

To be a disciple is to be a learner, a student in the school of Jesus. And a man, I suppose, may be said to be finding Christ when he is learning to look out on life through the windows of His mind; if he values things with His standards of worth; if he is learning to face life as it meets him in that attitude

and spirit which our Lord desires and perfectly expressed. The attitude of the school of Christ to life is, in a single phrase, perfect sonship, trustful and eager co-operation with the will of the Eternal Father: the life emptied of self-seeking, cleansed and enriched by the spirit of sacrificial service, and in "doing the will" finding peace and joy.

The teaching of Christ and the New Testament give us, not directions for life, but the ideal attitude to God, the ideal spirit in which life should be lived. But what the will of God is in detail, what it implies for us in the twentieth century, that Christianity does not define. Each generation must seek it for themselves, through the ministries of Science, Art and Industry, Education and Homemaking, and the challenge of Politics and Government. It is here that the will of God must be sought. Here is the sphere and the actual material for the living of the Christian life. We must regard all these diverse activities as the *content* of our redemptive effort. We must seek in them those spiritual values of Beauty, Truth and Justice in which the Being of God is expressed. All these are the concrete meaning of God's call to our generation. The scientist in his laboratory, the engineer controlling energy, the educationist guiding the people's thought, the financier and the skilled craftsman, the seaman and the worker in transport services, the administrator and the statesman, above all the parent moulding human character—to them the responsibility is given. A man is "saved" when his response to life is the response of one re-born in Christ. Christianity does

not consist in doing extraordinary things, but in doing ordinary things in an extraordinary spirit.

All this the Cathedral should inspire and hallow. Christianity, they tell us, is played out. But it is hardly very senile yet! Man may perhaps have lived upon this planet about one million years: Christianity a bare two thousand. Christianity is yet in its infancy. It is only beginning to be understood. And we stand in our day upon the threshold of whole new worlds of discovery and power. In the Christ-spirit are inexhaustible springs of unselfishness and readiness for sacrifice, unfailing resources of Faith and Hope and Power. In the challenge of our new knowledge, even in the bitterness of disillusionment, we are learning day by day fresh lessons about their application and their use. It is yours to pour the gifts and the skill with which you in this city are endowed, your research, your wealth, your various capacities, into the common stock of Man's endeavour, in the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ. So you will build up the completed structure of Life in its fulness responding to God's plan.

St. Paul, as we saw, compares the Christian group to a great piece of architecture, in which a living spirit clothes itself in a noble and creative design, and each part and detail is subordinate to the plan and purpose of the whole. Does not that apply? You have your great design—the relating of all life to the will of God, the attempt to dedicate our powers to discover and fulfil the divine purpose, that His Power, His Glory, and the mightiness of His Kingdom may be made known unto men. You have the

“Lamps” of Life, Truth, Power and Beauty. And, if you are learning of the Master, there are also the “Lamps” of Obedience and Sacrifice. You will have the spirit of sacrificial service, each part, each member, the servant of the whole. By this alone can the building be perfected and the great plan finally achieved. This spirit is the spirit of Youth. This spirit alone is constructive. The creative spirit of Brotherhood in Service, dedicated to the setting forward of whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure and lovely, just and honest and of good report, and to make them available for others in the spirit of our Saviour Christ—that is part, at least, of the meaning of Discipleship.

So far as a Christian Group is thus inspired we can say of it “Ye are being builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.” For the divine Spirit will be in their midst, creating, guiding, cleansing, fructifying, leading Life out into ever richer harmony in correspondence with the Eternal Will. There is the Temple not made with hands, which the Master declared that His spirit would build on earth when the Temple of His people was no more ; a Temple of spirits, sons and daughters of God, witnessing in the crowded ways of life to the perfect City which is yet to be.

REV. THOMAS YATES

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REV. THOMAS YATES

“ Together with Christ, he raised and seated us within the heavenly sphere in Christ Jesus, to display throughout the ages to come his surpassing wealth of grace and goodness toward us in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians ii, 6, 7 (Moffatt).

THE Christian faith had not yet been formalised when these things were written. They are indeed feeling out toward a great new theology which should be distinctively Christian, but as yet they are at the stage of an overwhelming astonishment and an assurance almost bewildered in its happiness. A new world of life has been opened, and through personal relationship with Christ, and what He stood for, the people of the new faith are consciously in possession of a wide and wealthy franchise. We may explore this grace by which it is claimed there is salvation. Clearly it is salvation into something which takes mightily to do with life. Whatever else grace and salvation in Christ may carry, they have to do in the Apostle's mind here chiefly with the powers of personality vitalised and intensified under the impact and dynamic of a new quality of living.

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It was the claim and promise of Jesus that He was come that men might have life and have it to the full.

Here in the opening of this document, earlier than the Gospels, is the testimony of a glowing experience to the justness of His claim. It is crowded with phrases which describe life in finer quality and larger amplitude. You hear, for example, this Apostle at prayer for his fellow-believers, and it is in prayer that a man most surely reveals both his assurance of actuality and his belief in possibilities. This man uses an energised vocabulary. "Wisdom, revelation, enlightenment, hope, riches, inheritance, power" are the terms in which he speaks, and when these are applied to life clearly they are describing an immense heightening and enriching of life's qualities and values. The mind of the man who thus prays is exultant with a sense of new ranges of possibility in human nature and new values for human living.

You take an ordinary and average level of life and experience. It has many redeeming things in it, and there need be no assessment of average living at a cynically low value. But it has no far vision, or keen insight. It has little of the inspiration which comes into life from the consciousness of a commanding and dignifying purpose. It has no thrill of conscious power and effectiveness in it. For the most part it is a prosaic getting on with it, and a dull getting through with whatever has to be done or experienced.

Suppose, then, such terms as ring out in the

prayer, which at no little distance precedes the text I have read, translated into a living experience. It would mean a human personality incomparably increased in its values and powers. "The eyes of your understanding enlightened"—which means insight so lit up that you see vividly; and real faith, as Ruskin said, is "veracity of insight." "Knowing the hope to which he calls us"—that is, aware of life as a vocation to be pursued in the light of a promise. "Knowing the riches of the glory of your inheritance in the saints"—that is, to be conscious that every high value which the best of our race has ever put into life is yours for a possession and a resource. "Knowing the exceeding greatness of His power"—that is, to be conscious of dynamic resources fed into life as from an unfailing fountain.

This is life led into a wealthy place, alert and responsive, because something has struck with might upon all its chords. It is what the Apostle and every New Testament writer testifies to as the effect of proceeding upon the value of Christ. To take the Christian view of things as determining the procedure of life is to take the open way to an incomparable heightening of life's values.

It was a tremendous testimony made by these New Testament people. They said that it was simply true that because of what Christ had become to them, and had wrought in them, the world and life were more significant, wealthy and exciting. It was not just their talk. We have the testimony of history that it was this new impulse and heightening of personality in the followers of the new faith

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which first arrested the attention of a tired age and a sick world. They had a quality of life in them new and startling. As Dr. Glover has said of them, they "out-lived, out-thought, out-died" their pagan contemporaries. The world of men was crying like the Carthaginian queen in the *Inferno*, "O that only the King of the universe were a Friend." These Christians said it is this which in Christ we are certain is true: the King of all the universe is Friend and Father, and their joy in it runs like a thrill through the New Testament.

Here is a theme made pertinent by the flatness and disillusionment which has fallen like a blight upon our time. We may be able to raise indefinitely the standard of living in our time, but if the quality of life cannot be raised, or be hindered from falling still, the pessimist, who has now enough material to give him a great innings, will be justified. For the quality of life there is no redeeming and remaking except by the powers of a vital religion, because there is no effectiveness in anything else for the purification of ideals, or so mighty for the stimulus of man's efforts to actualise them.

The affirmation to be explored is that the Christian view of God, man and the universe, confirmed by the living Christian experience, has broadened, deepened and intensified life whenever and by whomsoever it has been or is whole-heartedly proceeded upon. This is not to say that there have not been interpretations of the Christian scheme of things in the terms of dogma which have definitely narrowed and shadowed life. Some of these have

been accepted and dominant over periods of Christian history. But they have been perversions and distortions. With every revival and spring-tide of vital Christian faith and experience, with every recovered contact with the springs of life in Jesus Christ, there has come every time the same exultant sense of a mighty quickening of the powers of personality and the enrichment of the values of life.

I

It is a claim made for the Christian view of things on the ground of ITS RANGE.

It has spaciousness. The answer to all the great questions depends in the end upon what is held to be true about the nature and character of God. Every religion is tested ultimately by the impression of God which it holds and conveys. "What think ye of God?" is the question against which every religion, and every variety of every religion, must stand and be judged. According to its answer it is placed high or low in the scale of religious and spiritual values.

In its answer to this question the Christian faith stands solitary and supreme. The Christian view of God is in itself a direct and operative enlargement of personality and life. It has three great affirmations. GOD IS LIGHT. GOD IS LOVE. GOD IS A SPIRIT. There is not a word in these beyond a child's uttering. There is not an affirmation here

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which is not a deep where all our thoughts are drowned. There is a range and spaciousness here unrivalled, and no man can truly say, "I believe in God through Jesus Christ," without affirming a conviction which, in the measure of the thoroughness and intensity of its acceptance, enlarges his whole view of the universe and life. "My father," said Carlyle, "was religious with the consent of his whole faculties." The Christian view of God is one which a man can hold with the consent of his whole faculties, fearing not to give every one of them free range, and finding, in the doing of it, his faculties not only satisfied, but taken possession of, extended and refined.

It is so also with the Christian view of man. Alike by the account it gives of his origin and kinship, the measure it takes of his fall, the estimate it holds of his potentialities, the assurance it offers of his destiny, it is a flat denial to every belittling view of the human personality, and a stern rebuke of any and every mishandling of it.

It is so also with its view of the universe. "We now know too much of matter to be materialists," said the Earl of Balfour when Gifford Lecturer. That quiet remark was the funeral oration over a phase of thought which dominated a century of scientific discovery and progress. The Christian view of the universe has always known too much to abide in that particular prison-house.

Take it at what point you will, and whether it be true or false, the Christian view of things is a spacious way of looking at life. Whether it speaks

of God, or man, or the universe, there is nothing greater than the background, the setting, and the perspective it gives to our human living.

II

It is a claim made for the Christian view of things on the ground of ITS REALISM. To begin with it goes straight, and with the plainest speech, to a reality which man avoids naming when he can. It insists that it is reality; the one sinister, savage reality with which every man has to deal. It speaks of SIN. Protest is arising against a large part of our contemporary fiction, and one may hope it will gather volume. We have a whole range of fiction steeped in decadent perversity. It is sodden with disbelief in the higher aspects of human nature. It rejects the possibility, or even the desirability, of self-reverence and self-control in either sex. It is derisive over the antiquated notion of any victory of self-respect over things slimy, furtive and brutish. There is no realism in such writing. It will not face up to the reality of what it delights to describe, and which it asks us to take as a view of life. Life is not like this. It could not be carried on on such lines. If life were like this it would rot itself out in two generations. Realism tells, or tries to tell, the whole truth. The part of that whole truth which none can afford to ignore is held in the word Sin.

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Christianity speaks it. It faces up to it. It does something far greater than drag it into the light. It brings it within the shadow of the Cross of Christ.

“The solemn shadow of Thy Cross
Is better than the sun,”

and it is here alone that hope strikes through the dark realism of the perverse heart and will of man.

Well might the Apostle say, as he pondered this gospel, “O the depth!” It faces all the facts—all—not the fact of blankness, bleakness and dread only, but the deeper fact of the eternal Cross in the heart of God. It proclaims that God has made Himself our Saviour, and that the powers of God are pledged and confederate in the redeeming of the human heart, and all the energies of God are engaged for those who will have His pardon and cleansing. “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” The goodness of faith in Christ is that any self-condemned and any self-distrusting soul, any man who has seen enough of the world temptations to startle him, any man who, confronting the world of perverse and evil possibility in himself, has been beaten down, may bring his weakness and guilt and fears together with such poor treasure of good purpose and desire as may be his to bring, and by the simplest of trusts in a God who keeps His word, secure the great engagement of God for redemption, and for all that finally matters in life.

III

It is a claim made for the Christian view of things on the ground of ITS RADIANCE.

God, Who has made everything beautiful in its time, has for all time made nothing more beautiful than His evangel in Christ Jesus.

“ All the breath and bloom of the world in the
bag of one bee ;
All the wonder and wealth of the mine in the
heart of one gem ;
In the core of the pearl all the shade and shine
of the sea ; ”

and in the evangel of grace all the very beauty of the Lord our God. These wealthy phrases of the epistle are so many unfoldings of His surpassing wealth of grace, as experience explores and possesses its treasures. They describe a lighted life. Accepted and proceeded upon, the Christian view of things brings the glint of romance with it. It tells of conversion which is the unceasing romance of religion—the light and life of God creating and kindling newness of life in us. It speaks of love, the spark which lights a thousand lamps in life. It speaks of service, and tightens every power of life under a sense of responsibility. To name the last as a contribution to the zest and colour of life, is in contradiction to the mind of many, who live as if they believed that the romance and gaiety of life lie with irresponsibility and a devil-may-care

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flippancy. You have only to study the faces and watch, when they are off their guard, the demeanour of those who so think and live to know the falseness of their idea and hope. Of all modes of life the deliberately irresponsible is the most draining and disillusioning. It spells drabness and boredom to the soul scarcely to be borne, if so be that the soul can keep alive at all. What life needs for the recovery of its colour and zest and thrill, is the sense in it of the bigness of life and destiny under the eyes and in the grace of a living God. It is the sense of a stand to be made for the integrity of the mind, and the cleanness of the soul ; of an honourable burden to bear, and a trust to discharge, as becometh a man ; it is this which puts dignity, zest and colour into life, and redeems it from pettiness and sordidness.

The stuff of great high romance is made out of the heroisms man can show when fighting a hard battle. It is seen when man shows that, up against the worst things, he can keep some point of honour, some sense of high loyalties, and even if he be overwhelmed he can go down with a flag flying. It is out of such things in human nature that the masters of romance in literature have shaped their stories, and none may belittle the things that the humanist has to tell of the resources which the soul of man can furnish and display. But to this fine thing, the faith of a Christian adds a finer and, it may be added, a more reliable thing, the courage of faith, the serenity of an abiding peace. The Christ, who out of the heart of His conviction about God, said,

in the hour when the awful realism of the Cross smote upon Him, "I have overcome," lights up life with that same sense of victory, and throws a colour about its drabness, a light finer and rarer than was ever on the lands and seas of high romance. Do not conceive the Christian way as lying in the regions of a cold propriety, a mere decorum. Rightly conceived and daringly followed, it is the abiding romanticism. There is no career greater than to follow Christ. A wide franchise is His gift, and His calling is to a spiritual adventure.

There is but one thing which causes the lips that utter this affirmation to stumble and halt. It is that we, who call ourselves Christians, do so poorly proclaim this about our Lord. Our mediocre and stagnant spirituality, our wan and anæmic testimony, stand in such contrast to the life abundant.

The last word must be to ourselves, who do our Lord this injustice. We have but touched the fringes of what Christ means, and of what He can do for and in us. Somehow we must get deeper into Him. We must give Him a freer course to do more justice to Himself in us.

An old sculptor, whose fame stands secure in the history of art, was once found gazing at a block of untouched marble in silent contemplation. He was seeing with his artist soul the possibilities lying in it. He was heard to say in a whisper that was half a sigh and half an impatience, "What Godlike beauties thou hidest!"

This we may say of our own half-explored, half-experienced faith. Give the Lord Christ, the Master

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of all great living, a greater chance. These reluctances and hesitancies are not worthy of the magnificence of grace, and they hinder the goings of the Master of the life abundant.

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BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM 1911-1924 ; President of Christian Counter Communist Crusade. Born at Mansfield, Notts, December 1st, 1854, only son of F. Wakefield, J.P., Broomfield, Co. Wicklow, and Emily, daughter of Leatham Howard ; married 1878, Frances (died 1919), daughter of Henry Dallaway ; three sons and one daughter. Educated at Tonbridge School ; the Lycée Bonaparte, Paris ; Bonn ; Cuddesdon, Oxford. Curate of St. Peter's, Vauxhall, 1877-1878 ; Barnes, 1878-81 ; Vicar of All Saints, Swanscombe, 1881-1883 ; Lower Sydenham, 1883-1888 ; Sandgate, 1888-1894 ; Lecturer on English Literature, Crystal Palace, 1887-1891 ; member of the London School Board, 1897-1900 ; Mayor of St. Marylebone, 1903-1904 and 1904-1905 ; Rector of St. Mary's, Bryanston Square, 1894-1909 ; Prebendary to St. Paul's, 1908-1909 ; Dean of Norwich, 1909-1911 ; Chairman of Central Committee on the Unemployed ; Member of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law ; President of the Free and Open Church Society ; President of the National Council of Public Morals, 1913-21 ; Vice-President of the British Workers' League ; C.B.E. (Military), 1920 ; Commander of the Order of Leopold II. Publications : "A Fortnight at the Front," 1915 ; "Simple Answers to some Great Questions," 1916 ; "Life Won through Death," 1917 ; "The Church after the War," 1918 ; "Life and Religion" ; "Essay on Hamlet" and on "The Merchant of Venice."

CHURCH AND NATION

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP RUSSELL WAKEFIELD, D.D.,
C.B.E.(Mil.)

IT is wise for a preacher to make quite clear at the outset of his sermon what the subject is upon which he desires to speak. I would like to try to answer the question : What is the duty of the Church established in this country towards the people of the land generally ? It is comparatively easy to explain in some detail the rights of the faithful over the Body of Christ, and the legitimate claims of the Church upon those who accept full membership, but it is another matter to consider the responsibility of a specially privileged Church towards the life of the nation.

We have here in England an expectant Christianity sympathetic with the Established Church in national affairs. From Rome to Geneva, so to speak, there is a willingness to allow Canterbury to lead in great social efforts, and even to be the advance guard in furthering the cause of the great central Christian saving truths and practices.

This is one of the good effects of the Great War. There is a real generosity in allowing Anglicanism to represent Christianity in national affairs. Old jealousies have died down, and without sacrifice of

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principle the other expressions of the Faith in this land have stood side by side with us in applying Christ to human necessity. It behoves us then to realise our duty and to seek in every way the co-operation of our comrade Churches in carrying out all that our Blessed Lord taught as being the duty of His followers towards the world.

We are faced at the outset by the fact that many people object to clergy being allowed any official part in civic administration, and though legally there are now no objections to the parson holding municipal office, still there is a good deal of prejudice prevailing. It is not, however, because of the spiritual position of the priest; it has to do with the privileged position for exercising undue influence which the clergyman is supposed to have. The Free Church minister is a spiritual officer, but political disabilities did not apply to him but only to the Anglican and Roman Catholic priests. Let us presume, however, that the prejudice is no longer very powerful and that the Church is recognised as having an official duty towards helping this world to be Christian in ideal and in government. The Church has no official authority in reference to the great political parties which between them manage a country, but if any party deliberately gives out as part of its policy something which contradicts the principles of Christianity the Church is bound to use all its influence to have such policy overthrown. If only in past days the Churches had combined better for such a purpose, there would have been less evil to combat, less selfish and

material legislation to get rid of when national conscience has been awakened. The pity of it is that only too often religion has been quoted in order to bolster up unworthiness and to stimulate the degrading. Happily the day has dawned when Parliaments are not ashamed to confess that international association can only be friendly and ennobling when the principles of Christ illuminate the world governments. It is true that side by side with the advocacy of international peace the nations have to be so strongly armed that national safety may be ensured against the possible treacherous dealing of some wicked State, but please God the day may soon arrive when an international police system may control on Christian lines all civilised communities.

Care must be taken by all the Churches to ensure that, whether in regard to the conduct of one nation towards another, or in reference to the internal government of any country, religion shall keep its place and shall not interfere as to matters with which it has no concern. It is perfectly true that each Christian should feel that nothing human is outside his interest, but that does not mean that he should use his influence, still less if possible that he should move a religious organisation to take sides in mere party questions.

The Christian Church is bound to care for the temporal well-being of all men. Its members are citizens and have citizen duties. Unfortunately the salvation often preached has dealt too exclusively with what is called eternity, that unexplainable

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word, and not enough with time, which makes an appeal to all, and with which Christ is so constantly concerned. We have not one tithe enough told us in the Gospels as to the life of our Blessed Lord, but the story we have put before us deals in great measure with His work and teaching as to human needs on earth. He heals the sick, He preaches love, He exemplifies brotherhood. He exhorts us to follow Him not for future reward but to make this world blessed through our personal sacrifice. We all know of wonderful instances of individual devotion by the ministers and disciples of every variety of Christianity; but can it be said that the government of any Christian country is founded upon the life and teaching of Jesus Christ? We hear a great deal about empty churches and decreasing Church influence, but this, if true, is due to some extent to the elimination of religion from national government. If every social effort were held to be only satisfactory if approved by the teaching of Jesus much that exists to-day could not be continued. We cannot combine Christianity with any industrial condition that is not inspired by love. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another, for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." This is the Christian citizen's central duty. How can it fit in with revolution? How can any real permanent settlement of a dispute between Christians, whether individuals or organisations, be based upon purely selfish or material considerations? It is a definite duty of the Church to make the country in its public life as devoted to

Christian principles as we ask the individual to be in his private character. We may rightly blame the exaggerations of some opponents of religion, but he who reads history fairly cannot but admit that our Churches have lamentably failed at times to apply our Blessed Lord to social diseases. It has not been the fault of the hard-working parish priest, but he has had more than enough to do in dealing with the individual sin and misery due to evil conditions. The Church as a national influence has, however, often failed to make its members living, sacrificing citizens. We are told that those who hold extravagant social opinions are the only ones who take full advantage of civic rights, and that consequently much that is undesirable sullies our social and industrial life. I am afraid that a reply could be made to the effect that the want of living Christian citizenship on the part of many of the more privileged Christian Church members has had more to do with what we all deplore than the often ignorant outcries of those who know by personal experience the suffering consequent upon non-Christian management of human affairs. Our Lord is not given fair play in citizen life. He has His remedy ready. He in no way desires to interfere except to bless. "My Kingdom is not of this world."

But of this world He would make a Christlike Kingdom and He would have His Church leavening the land. No man should live unto himself. He should be striving for mutual happiness, and his opportunity comes in great measure because of his

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having a share in all civic administration. He can pray for the world, he can be an example to the world, he can work for the world, he can choose those who are to be the statesmen of the world, he can be and do all this as unto the Lord. We suffer in England certainly from a want of imagination and in consequence of a want of idealism. We do not even sufficiently spiritualise our religion, and this makes the Church services often unattractive. The great central act of worship loses its power when it is made too material. When the Church tells the people that Christ gives to us in the great Sacrament His Body and His Blood, the true worshipper looks out of that which is the outward and visible sign and sees the inward spiritual grace, the gift of the life-giving power of the Lord Himself. To each one comes a Divine strength enabling the recipient to go out, as did Christ Himself, to be a saviour to the world, breathing into humanity the love of God, so that all that is done by states and individuals shall make for the building up of a City of God on earth. Who would be prepared to say that even the best of governments that we know of makes for oneness—for communion. Populations herded together in such a way as to prevent the sense of anything uplifting breathing on the struggling inhabitants; a life of struggle going on which emphasises inequalities and makes the few the conquerors of the many, the many the enviers of the few; temptations to a lower life placed so attractively before the weak as to make resistance almost impossible, luxury being the

desirable, self-restraint the contemptible ; these are amongst the facts against which the Churches should be on fire and to which they should be opposing the religion of our Lord. When we are told that the duty of Christianity is to preach the Gospel our answer should be that we cannot do that truly without calling upon Christians to practise the Gospel, and we must not expect those upon whom falls the almost unrelieved strain of poverty, misery, undue competition, and who see no sign of the richly blessed being ready to bear one another's burdens, to be churchgoers satisfied with existing conditions. The Church in our own land is at the dividing of the ways. It has learnt some useful lessons in regard to the world in which we live. We owe to Science much that should make us more conscious of the beauty of high Christian effort. This earth is not the creation of a few centuries. It is a place the age of which is unlimited, the future of which is immeasurable and the progress of which must be constant. There is, so to speak, a grander field for Christian social endeavour than may have been realised in past days. The Church should be proud to be an instrument whereby this great world shall become God's possession. It is not that what we have to give humanity is difficult to understand or unsympathetic in approach. It is a Gospel which can never be outgrown and which can never be unsuited to the simplest of those who have life's battle to fight. The Man is magnetic in His personality, and it is wonderful how the most down-trodden of citizens never doubts Christ even

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though he repudiates every organised expression of His teaching. The opportunity is there for us to win the world. The danger is aloofness on the part of Churches from subjects which some have regarded in the past as not belonging to organised religion.

Empty churches are often consequent upon the people knowing that to neglect the civic life is something which runs directly contrary to the story of the man Christ Jesus. The Cross is the refuge of the distressed, the sinful, the defeated in life's struggles. The teaching forces of Christianity are false to the Crucified if they are not inspiring the citizens of every country to make their government touch every effort made for betterment with the wand of Christ. It is a good thing that in the Parliament of our land the day's work begins with prayer. May the day dawn when every Act upon the Statute Book shall originate and be carried through to the glory of God, and to the good of humanity, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER

THE LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER
(*The Right Rev. Henry Luke Paget, D.D.*).

DR. PAGET is the third son of the late Sir James Paget, F.R.S., LL.D., D.C.L., Serjeant-Surgeon to H.M. Queen Victoria. He was educated at Shrewsbury and Christ Church, Oxford. He was curate of St. Andrew's, Wells Street, 1877 to 1879, and then for two years curate of Leeds and Assistant Lecturer at the Leeds Clergy School. In 1881 he was placed in charge of the Christ Church Oxford Mission in Poplar, and in 1886 was appointed Vicar of St. Ives, Hunts. He was for nearly twenty years Vicar of St. Pancras, London; in 1906 he was consecrated Bishop Suffragan of Ipswich. He was Bishop of Stepney, 1909 to 1919, and in 1919 he became Bishop of Chester.

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THE LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER

*“ And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees,
walking.”* Mark viii, 24.

THIS miracle holds its own and keeps its place in our memories. It is obviously and in many respects like others. But somehow it refuses to sink back into any general conception of our Lord's work of power and pity and love. It stands by itself. It is more than likely that in days long past, when we, as children, heard it read in church or in family prayers, it laid hold of our imagination ; and that, not only because it was a variant from the ordinary course, but because it contained just those elements which children as well as grown-up people appreciate and enjoy. It has a degree of suspense ; it keeps you waiting ; it has its bit of surprise ; you might guess by the analogy of other miracles that sight and clear vision would come at once, but they do not. But above all there is the true bit of human interest which comes as an honest and cautious man seems trying, and trying rather hard, to describe what he finds it hard to describe with any intelligible precision. “ He asked him if he saw ought. And

he looked up and said, I see men as trees, walking." We need not trouble ourselves with the little difference in readings between the Authorised and Revised Versions. He may have been sure that what he saw were men with blurred outlines ; or he may have seemed to see trees, but trees that walked. It does not matter much. In either case he is trying his best to explain his present relation to things which he is beginning to see, and will soon, if he has faith and a moment's patience, see quite clearly.

It has an acute modern interest. Our Lord's question is one that has to be asked again and again in the ward of an ophthalmic hospital, where men, injured perhaps in the Great War, are asked with regard to any improvement, however small, in their power of vision. It may be only that they can see some difference between light and darkness, or detect the presence of large objects placed very close to them. Do you see anything ? Sometimes the only answer may be a pathetic negation : nothing at all ! Sometimes just a little consciousness of the presence of light ; sometimes the recognition of, they know not what it is, moving in their neighbourhood. How gladly they welcome even the slightest sign that the lost faculty is coming back to them, that they see things a little more clearly than they did a week ago, or when their course of treatment began ! There will of course be despondent, and it may be morose patients who may be inclined to treat as nothing the first glimmerings of sunlight, contrasting them rather bitterly

with what they may remember of perfect eyesight. Others, it may be, will be too readily content with a recovery that is incomplete. At certain stages we can imagine the patient denying the possibility of seeing more clearly than he does at the present moment, refusing, it may be, to use the precautions and the remedies by which after a while perfect sight may be restored.

And it is worth while to remind ourselves, for it has a real illustrative value, how difficult doctors find it to estimate the real worth of what patients tell them about themselves. They mean to be accurate, they mean to describe neither more nor less than what they actually feel. But it is to be doubted whether there is any field where fancy and exaggeration play a greater part than in a patient's account of his own symptoms.

What has really been the degree of pain which he (or she) describes as agony? How many hours of repose has he enjoyed on what he insists has been a sleepless night? How much, to descend a little lower, has he or she eaten or drunk when they have found themselves absolutely unable to touch anything? Doctors have sometimes said that it is wise to apply almost every other sense to the case; certainly sight and touch; before you open your ears too readily to the patient's own description of his symptoms. It is so hard for him not to confuse fact with fancy, not to spoil by exaggeration his account of himself. Just as sometimes in the ruins of antiquity you are startled by the discovery of a modern phrase or a modern feature, so here there

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is something strangely familiar to modern ears in the man's answer to our Lord's inquiry. He is so clearly doing his best to describe what is difficult to define. "I see men as trees, walking." He sees something; but he is equally clear that he sees not yet all there is to see! "Men as trees, walking" seems to stand extraordinarily well as a constant type of partially recovered sight!

II

Does it not seem to you that all this, so simple, so natural, so human, has a bearing on ever so much that is happening on the surface or under the surface of life in the present day? It is presumptuous, and it is impossible to sum up in a sermon the tendencies of the time. Bishop Gore says that "the world in which we live to-day can only be described as chaotic in the matter of religious beliefs"; and he embarks on a solid and deliberate work of reconstruction. He takes nothing for granted; he begins at the very beginning, and perseveres to the end. He believes, and quite rightly, that this is the way in which he can best help those who may need help and are not too timid or too indolent to seek it.

We name this simply as really characteristic of our times; times in which, for one thing, the power of tradition seems to be broken; times in which men wish to think things out; times in which men

are apt to turn round with something like bitterness on conventions which have little reality at the back of them, on formulas that seem to have lost all meaning, on religious practice that was merely perfunctory and mechanical. You hear, indeed, the most various and contradictory estimates of what is going on. One man will tell you of a world immensely eager to know about religion ; another will speak with equal certainty of widespread indifference, of despair with regard to what he sums up as the " whole thing."

Be that as it may, it is almost impossible to rid oneself of the impression of really vast numbers of people not only eager and earnest in their desire to come at the truth ; but patient and self-sacrificing in their search for it, and rewarded now and again by what seems to be a real illumination, a clear and firm apprehension of something which, maybe, they believed once but have ceased to believe ; of something which they knew once and have forgotten ; of something which they have heard spoken of but which they have never in any real sense made their own.

It is not conceit or scepticism or unwillingness to be convinced that makes them critical and hesitant. It is very often a high form of spiritual sincerity ; it is a great protest in many cases against the real profaneness of unreality. I often wonder what is going on under the cautious reticence which is so often their silent response to spiritual approach. Why is it that just now and again in a conversation, in a sermon, we who try to speak of

religion feel that, in the language of the stage, we have managed "to get something across," something that has found lodgment in the secret places of their hearts and minds. What is the meaning of the unsought popularity of a certain number of our preachers, a curiously different thing from what one can remember of some of the superficial popularities of the past? Is there not a general conviction that it is difficult to believe as people seemed to believe in old days; a real desire to rest your faith on a sound foundation; a great fear of unreality in things that really matter; an almost nervous dread of easy acceptance of what is offered for your belief, of docile repetition of what you are bidden to repeat? "To see for myself and not another"; what Job longed for seems so curiously like that for which so many long to-day. I want to have for myself something, though ever so little, of immediate consciousness of things divine; something like a personal assurance of an ultimate reality; something of which I can be sure because I venture to believe that it has really come from God through Christ to me!

It is immensely difficult to give coherent description to what is in itself so incoherent; to give formal expression to what is only half formed; to put into words that which has as yet found no words for its heart's desire. Again and again it is with some people with regard to the spiritual world as it is with the blind in the matter of the natural world: they do not want it described to

them; yes, they seem to say, it may be all that and more, and I do not grudge you the clearness of your vision nor the confidence (I honestly believe it to be sincere; at least for your own sake I hope that it is) of your speech; you describe it beautifully; and no doubt when I see it I shall find it to be just as you say; but I want to see it for myself; just a specimen of the gold of that land which is so good, a sample of its produce: for I am not of those who are tempted to think scorn of that pleasant land!

“He put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.” It was a real sight of a real world, a different thing from those strange prismatic colours which you get on rubbing your eyes or pressing your eyelids, a different thing from the idea of reality which imagination might frame on the strength of information. So far as it went, he was indeed beginning to see for himself. And yet it was all very puzzling. We sympathise with the difficulty which his candour encounters in trying to describe it. Objects that look like trees and yet are walking; possibly men: but yet so vague in outline that he cannot be sure that they are.

It is all very simple and natural and just what an honest blind man would say when his eyes were first open to the vision of a relatively real external world; and yet what a wonderful likeness there is between his first vision of a world outside him and one's first experiences of the spiritual world.

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Try to think of a man of to-day, a young man for choice, beginning, as some do, to see things for himself, beginning, in a new way, to be sure of things. The hand of our Saviour, we believe, has been laid upon him; Jesus has come to him, and in His light he begins to see light. Things are beginning to come clear. But there is none of the certainty that marked the case of the man born blind, as we read of him in the ninth chapter of St. John: "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." Point after point may be coming into clearness. "I feel," he might say, "fairly clear about this, pretty certain about that." But the very clearnesses have their puzzles and their difficulties. There is no sharpness of outline; things run into one another, and truths seem to collide. The very sense, for example, of God's love is challenged and harassed by all sorts of facts that seem to contradict it. Nothing seems to behave as it ought. The old coherence of the blind days of self-love and self-seeking, of conventionalism, or mere thoughtlessness, had a sort of consistency. That is gone; and the man's mind is almost distracted with the vision of things vital and real and appealing to him, it may be, as nothing has ever appealed before; yet all the while in strange and stubborn conflict not only with the imaginations of his blindness but with one another. "I see men as trees, walking"! There is for most men a very special sense of confusion when seeing for themselves they begin to see things as they really are!

III

This is no new thing, but it is, I believe, widely prevalent in our own day. Some people tell us that we are on the eve of a great religious revival ; others speak of something like a great revolt from religion ; we are told how, in places where students congregate, they are "constantly talking about religion." The journals which more or less represent them lead us to believe that this is so ; and we have pretty frequent instances of the way in which a man, who really wants help and guidance, will state as a purely hypothetical case a case which is as a matter of fact his own, just as a nervous man might describe his symptoms to a doctor as those of a friend ; they are really his own !

If this is so it may be well to offer some suggestions as to the difficulties and the responsibilities of those who are thus coming to "see for themselves." Let me illustrate them by something which I well remember in the life of a little child. It was on the coast of Wales, and towards sunset the Isle of Man was seen with unusual clearness. The child had been laid to sleep, but an officious relative thought it would be good to wake the child to show him the distant island. He was brought down dreadfully sleepy, and told where to look for it. You know the sort of thing that happens ! "Do you see it ? No, you are not looking in the right direction. Do you see it ? No, not there ! Do you see it ; a sort of little hill rising out of the sea ? No, not that !" And after repeated "No's," at last, very weary

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and very bored, the child said " Yes " and was taken back to his bed. But he took a long time getting to sleep ; he was clearly unhappy and uneasy about something, and at last he said to his nurse, " Would a gentleman say he had seen a thing when he had not seen it ? " It was a very simple thing, but valuable and memorable as an honest child's protest against pretending to see what really he had not seen. He felt that there might be something ignoble about it !

No, a gentleman does not say that he has seen a thing when he has not seen it ! We sometimes do so ; and we tempt others to do the like. It is a very old religious failing. The prophets warn us against those who say " Thus saith the Lord," when the Lord has not spoken !

To say that you have seen a thing when you have not seen it ! It lies at the heart of religious insincerity, of shallow religious talk, of solemn conventionality. We do it when we use language which we do not understand, and pretend to experiences which are not ours. It is dreadfully tempting sometimes. No one can consider the religious output of the day without noticing the demands we are making on our mystics. We read them eagerly ; we long to see what they have seen, and to feel what they have been permitted to feel. We have won, by prayer, our own little bit of religious experience ; times at which God has been wonderfully near us, and we have heard him speak ; but it is not enough for us ; we want more ; and then it is that the temptation comes—the temptation

which somehow the better part of us resists—to say we have seen a thing when we have not seen it.

Cannot you understand a revolt against this temper in the present day? I am sure it is very often real intellectual and religious honesty that lies behind the reticence, the slowness to confess, the avoidance of open profession, such as is expressed and involved in coming to Holy Communion. I will not pretend that I believe what, so far, I do not believe; I will not say that I have seen a thing when I have not seen it!

But is there not another side to this? Must not the honesty that refuses to say that it has seen what it has not seen be at least as ready, at least as firm to own, when it has seen a thing, that it has really seen it? Even if you find it hard to say what you have seen; even if it is only men as trees walking, blurred outlines, confused forms; whether it be matter of faith or matter of conduct, you cannot say you have seen nothing. Hold on firmly to that which you have got; the light is faint and dim, but you must begin to trust it and walk in that light. There is need of patience, there is need of prayer. Find time to think things out, and the Lord, who has begun a good work in you, will perform it to the end. The hands which were laid upon you and gave you partial sight will be laid on you, as it were, again, and you will look up; you will “steady your eyes” and you will see all things clearly.

There is a temper, a spirit, which it is well for us to avoid! It is possible, and we are sometimes

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tempted to be too easily content with a blindness only partly cured, with a seeing only half restored to us. There is after all no merit in vagueness ; that blurred outline, that misty form are not really characteristic of the great realities you are coming to apprehend, the great spiritual truths you are on your way to discovering. The mist is on the lens, not on the star ; in the eye, not on the landscape. There are those who, half seeing, rest too contentedly in the twilight, in love with the vagueness, tempted to deny, sometimes even with scorn, the possibilities of clearer vision, of stronger and more coherent faith. But "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day !"

THE VERY REV. G. K. A. BELL, D.D.

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY

(*The Very Rev. George Kennedy Allen Bell, D.D.*).

DR. BELL is the eldest son of the Rev. J. Allen Bell, Canon of Norwich, and was born in 1883. He was educated at Westminster and Christ Church, Oxford, obtaining a First Class in Classical Moderations, a Second Class in the Final Classical School, and the Newdigate Prize. After working for three years as curate at Leeds Parish Church, he returned to Christ Church, of which he was student and tutor 1910-1914. From 1914-1924 he was Resident Chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and acted as Assistant Secretary to the Lambeth Conference, 1920. He was appointed Dean of Canterbury 1924. He is the Editor of *Documents on Christian Unity*, 1920-1924, and *The Official Report of the Stockholm Conference*, 1925.

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST AND CHRISTIAN UNITY*

THE VERY REV. G. K. A. BELL, D.D.

*"These all act contrary to the decrees of
Cæsar, saying that there is another King, one
Jesus."* Acts xvii, 7.

TO-DAY for the first time a great Christian communion is celebrating the Feast of the Kingship of Christ. Such an event, so different from those more partial commemorations to which the Church of Rome has accustomed us, would in any case call for a passing thought from Christians who own another allegiance. But there is a feature in this particular observance which strikes a deeper note and rouses a keener attention. In his Encyclical Letter, fixing this festival for the last Sunday in October, Pope Pius XI ordered that it should be first kept on October 31st in this year of Our Lord, the last Sunday being also the last day of the month. And the feature which arrests our attention is this. All over Germany and Scandinavia and throughout the Lutheran Church this day has been kept and is being kept again as Reformation Day. For it was on October 31st, 1517, that the famous Ninety-five

* Preached before the University of Oxford, October 31st, 1926.

KINGSHIP OF CHRIST AND CHRISTIAN UNITY

Theses were posted up on the gates of the Castle Church at Wittenberg by Martin Luther. Thus this new Feast of the Kingship of Christ, this evangelical feast of the Roman Catholic Church, has its beginning on the anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation.

Will you bear with me then if upon such a day, and in face of such a uniting commemoration, I ask you to think of the Kingship of Jesus, as it concerns ourselves and our divisions.

It is hardly open to dispute that the last few years have witnessed a movement of quite uncommon significance for closer unity between the different Christian Communions. Even before the war there were signs that the spirit of reconciliation was astir, signs that here and there, in catholic and evangelical circles alike, there was a longing for a more inclusive fellowship among Christians. But with the war and since, the desire for such a fellowship has quickened, and the seeking after it in men's hearts and minds has plunged deeper. It is not only that some of the old endeavours, often representing the labours of many years, move more swiftly and surely. But new efforts have come to the birth. New appeals have been launched. New ideas have been shaped, or old ideas have found a new expression.

You will not wish me to give a catalogue of such endeavours. It will be sufficient if I say that they are found in greater or less degree in most churches, and among all types of Christians. Sometimes they take the form of an effort to knit a particular family

of Churches more closely together, like the Methodists in England or the Presbyterians in Scotland. Sometimes they aim at securing nearer relations between denominations which, though not belonging to the same immediate family, are closely connected, like the Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists in Canada. Sometimes they represent the attempt to bring communions standing for a different faith and order of ministry into a common household, as the English Free Churches and the Church of England. Nor are the most ancient communions unaffected by the common desire, for the Orthodox Eastern Church in almost all its branches has in these recent years been turning towards the West, with its different traditions and culture. And, more remarkable still, there have been indications of a change not of doctrine or claim, may be, but of temper and approach in the Church of Rome, as we see not only in the conversations at Malines, but in the study now beginning in certain Benedictine monasteries in Belgium for the cultivation of a better understanding of especially the Orthodox Church on the one hand, and the Anglican Church on the other. All these movements are movements in the field of Church unity. They possess an interest not only for the student of Church history or for the members of the different Churches, but for men and women of goodwill wherever they may be found. And they are to find a focus which wise men will watch with sympathy and hope in the first meeting next year of the World Conference on Faith and Order, when representatives from all the

Churches except Rome will assemble for prayer and study and counsel at Lausanne.

It is impossible not to be struck by the width and the diversity of such a development as this. And yet, although these many movements are so rich in interest, and so impressive in their variety and range, we are bound to admit that so far as the manifestation of one Universal Church in a tangible form is concerned, the vision tarries and the days which those who wait for it must wait may be many and long. We know the difficulties which, from various points of view, stand in the way of a conception of Church unity which is founded, for example, on the supremacy of the Pope, or the universal prevalence of a ministry episcopally ordained, or the mutual recognition of existing ministries, or some other basis of order or organisation with which important questions of doctrine are bound up. And we appreciate the unsatisfactory and limited character of schemes of federation. Some of these difficulties will yield, as time goes on, are yielding, to patient study, charity and prayer. But it is not to be expected that breaches of such ancient standing can be swiftly repaired, or that the issues for which their ancestors were forced into the wilderness will be lightly admitted by earnest Christians of to-day to have lost all reality.

Are we, therefore, to infer that the Reunion of Christendom is an empty dream, and that it is waste of time to spend our efforts on what, as it seems, in its fulness must take so long to accomplish?

No, believe me, such a supposition is both dismally unfaithful and dismally untrue. The conclusion which I would rather draw is this :

First, with regard to the gains already made in Christian fellowship, the understandings already won, lay hold of them, make the most of them.

Second, as to your own church or your own ministry, be willing to be humble.

Third, and above all, let us see whether, apart from so-called ecclesiastical unity, but in no sense inconsistently therewith, we cannot at once, we Christians, show forth a unity of heart and mind and will.

Let me say a word about each of the first two parts of my conclusion, and then speak more at large about the third.

(1) There can be no doubt as to the reality of the progress made in understanding between different Christian communions. And for much of this a great debt is due to the Lambeth Appeal. In our own country hands have been stretched across what even twelve years ago was a gulf. Never were the relations between the Church of England and the Free Churches so friendly ; or the associations in work and counsel and prayer so cordial. Let us cherish and foster this friendship, and not neglect the liberty we are now allowed by ecclesiastical authority both in hearing and in preaching sermons. Further, the Church of England is now in communion with two Continental Churches, the Church of Sweden and (as the Lambeth Conference of 1908 makes plain) the Old Catholic Church in Germany and

Switzerland. Let us see to it that this intercommunion finds some fuller expression, and is encouraged besides by such methods as an interchange of visitors, and students, of official correspondence and reports. Again, during the past few years an extraordinary sympathy has developed between the Orthodox and the Anglican Communion. And many instances of this fellowship will occur, besides the joint commemoration of the Council of Nicæa in Westminster Abbey a year ago. Let us also take every opportunity we can to promote this friendship. And there are other Churches in Europe, both Catholic and reformed, with which we are surely well advised to develop any *rapprochement* that already exists.

(2) Next, am I not right in urging that in addition to making the most of our church friendships, new and old, we should show a little humility ourselves. The note which especially struck the imagination of Christian people in the Lambeth Appeal was the note of humility, of confession. After all, the particular Church to which each of us belongs is not wholly free from blame for the condition of broken fellowship; and it is surely conceivable that more than one Christian communion, to which we are strangers, in spite of the deficiencies which we may see, has treasures and gifts and blessings of no small value to the Universal Church. Let me quote as a fitting expression of the spirit with which I myself would wish to be filled, the words of Alexander Whyte. "When we have humbled ourselves to admit that some other Churches have things of no

small moment to teach us and to share with us, and things it will greatly enrich us to receive and to assimilate ; when we are of a Christian mind enough to admit and even to welcome thoughts and views and feelings like these—then the day of a reconstructed Christendom will have begun to dawn, at least for ourselves."

(3) Thirdly and last of all, shall we not see whether apart from ecclesiastical unity, but in no way inconsistent therewith, we, who are Christians in all communions, cannot *now* rise up to a unity of heart and mind and will.

An eminent divine has recently lamented the *politicism* of historians of the English Church, by which he means their special concern with ecclesiastical (and sometimes secular) politics, with the struggle of factions, with attempts to suppress Puritanism, or Enthusiasm, or Liberalism, or Ritualism, with appointments to bishoprics, and debates in Convocation and Lambeth Conferences. And he urges that politics touch only the surface of Christianity, and that the history of a Church ought to be a biography of ideals.

So perhaps the history of the Reunion of Christendom ought also to be a biography of ideals. And perhaps those efforts are most fruitful and most inspired which envisage Christian unity as above all a unity of soul, a unity of purpose.

After what I have already said, I hope no-one will imagine that I undervalue the institutional element in Christian Reunion. It is necessary. It is indispensable. But it is not all. The point which I

wish to suggest to you is this. There is a way in which we can unite now, in which many are already one above their divisions. And it is here that this new Feast of the Kingship of Jesus Christ, kept on Reformation Day, offers us help.

The belief that Christ is King rises above all the reformations and breaches of the Christian Church. It is the glorious confession which His subjects make that His way is the true way of life, and His yoke that which all men should receive. It is the enthronement of Jesus of Nazareth in the minds of men because he is very truth, and it is from him that truth must be obediently received by all mankind: in the wills of men, because he will so subdue our wills as to lead us on to the noblest aims; and, in the hearts of men, because of his mercy and kindness which draw all men to him, for there never was nor ever will be a man loved so much and so universally as Jesus Christ.

It is a very scriptural belief, and common to all Christians. It has been proclaimed in this peculiarly vivid way to-day by the Church of Rome. It is very good Lutheran teaching, and only a few weeks ago formed the burden of a sermon in an English Cathedral by the most eminent living Lutheran Churchman, the Archbishop of Upsala; besides being glanced at in the last two of the ninety-five Theses of Martin Luther. It is a principal theme in the preaching of the greatest living Calvinist in France, Wilfred Monod. And it was this same affirmation that Christ is King, and the desire to show how the Kingship could be expressed in life

and work that drew the representatives of all Churches but Rome to the Universal Christian Conference at Stockholm last year.

But true as this may be, some of you may be asking, how does the holding of such a belief affect or alter the situation to-day? And the answer, I reply, is this: It is true that we all believe, or appear to believe, that Christ is King. But we believe it independently, individually, not recognising that after all it is a belief that we can hold together. Let us hold it together. And perhaps we shall give more force to our belief if we realise that it concerns us all, and in different ways requires action from us all together.

And again a measure of the individualism of our belief is the fact that, when all is said and done, the majority of us in our different Churches still look askance at one another, and think so much of our neighbour's imperfections and so little of our own, and are far readier to suspect or to condemn another communion than to love or to praise. May God grant us help to confess that Christ is the King of us all, for if we will only try to emphasise our common Christian allegiance as his subjects in the affairs of daily life, both public and private, and to study its implications, then the differences between the separated portions of Christ's Church will fall into their lower place, and will indeed be gradually transformed, as we more richly enjoy our intercommunion of heart and mind and will.

Let me end with a parable from a great Russian theologian, Nicolas Glubokowsky :—

“The unity,” he said, “that our Saviour loves and ordains cannot be brought about by means of mutual propaganda and conquest. It must be sought in the heights or in the depths of the communion’s spiritual being.” And he took the image from his native country. “A Russian house may be divided into several rooms by low walls. Up above there are no dividing walls ; down below the people live in separate rooms. Is unity to be gained by thrusting the walls aside so that those who live in the other rooms must either be crushed to death or leave their dwellings and enter the one that is taking possession of more and more of the floor space ? Or must they be crowded and quarrel about the space ? There is another way out of the difficulty. Let the walls remain. Each individual thrives best in his spiritual home. One may, of course, appreciate another’s home, and still remain and thrive best in one’s own. No, the demand that is made of us is greater and more difficult than to increase a little, or much, at the expense of others. That which takes place to the detriment of our brethren is no real gain. Nations that live on conquest are still at a low stage of political and social culture. So is the communion which uses every means to strive for power and external conquests. Do not move the walls. But let us all grow in faith, hope and love, so that we reach above the divisions and see and show our membership of the same Church and congregation of Christ ”—of Christ the King !

REV. HUBERT L. SIMPSON, M.A.

REV. HUBERT LOUIS SIMPSON, M.A.,

is the third son of the late Sir Alexander Russell Simpson, M.D., LL.D., Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Edinburgh. He was educated at Edinburgh, and afterwards studied at Marburg. He began his ministry at Kilcraggan on the Clyde, and thereafter was minister of Westbourne Church, Glasgow, for eleven years. He served as Chaplain with the Guards and 7th Divisions in France. He has twice been round the world, preaching in pulpits of all denominations and lecturing in college centres. Author of "The Intention of His Soul," "Altars of Earth," "Put Forth by the Moon," etc.

THE REVEALING RENT

REV. HUBERT L. SIMPSON, M.A.

“The king rent his clothes . . . and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.” 2 Kings vi, 30.

HISTORY furnishes few more graphic stories than that of the siege of Samaria. The Syrians had soon forgotten the kindnesses they had been shown so recently in this same city, and very ungratefully, and, for aught that appears, without any provocation, they sought its complete destruction. The plan of the invaders was not to carry the city in one or two assaults, but to camp about it and gradually starve out the garrison and the inhabitants. So great was the scarcity of food, and so extreme the sufferings of the wretched people within, that an ass's head, which has but little flesh upon it, and that unsavoury, unwholesome, and for a Jew ceremonially unclean, was sold for some £5, and a small quantity of pulse or some such coarse corn, then called “dove's dung,” about a pint of it fetched twelve or fifteen shillings.

It was when things had reached this extremity that the incident occurred whose gruesome details are recorded in the narrative. In her distress the unhappy woman of the story appealed to the king

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to aid her. He was passing by upon the wall, encouraging the defenders and giving orders for the mounting of the guard, when she approached him with her harrowing tale. "And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes ; and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh." Like King James IV of Scotland, with his iron belt, this Hebrew king had a hidden source of self-imposed suffering.

That was a moment of revelation for all who witnessed the king's act. They had not taken in before that he was so full of pity for the distress of his people. They had before their eyes every day the outward gleam and glory of his royal palace, and the symbols of his greatness. They were well aware wherein he differed from them and surpassed them, but they had never guessed how deeply he was "touched with a feeling of their infirmity," or how "in all their affliction he was afflicted." They had doubtless thought that though he dwelt in their midst, yet he could have no real sense and understanding of their sorrows. They imagined that the king was spared their tribulation, and the thought even seems to have crossed their minds that, if he willed it, he might have done something to relieve their desperate need out of his royal barn floor and winepress. And then there came to them that moment of revelation, that act which laid bare the inner heart of their sovereign, how good and patient and one with his people he was, when, in a sudden agony of grief for the wrongs and sufferings of his own, the great man rent his royal robe, and through

the purple rent the astonished people caught a glimpse of red and quivering flesh, teased and torn by the hidden garment of pain.

What strange and unutterable thoughts, what surging emotions, must have risen in the breasts of those who saw that sight! How the murmurs would die upon their lips, and the doubts within their minds would dissolve! How the pain and the weariness and the wounds would be forgotten in the joy of communion and service with a king who stooped to share the sorrow of his subjects! With what access of ardour they would move to their posts of watching upon the wall. Who would not follow and fight for a king like that? Their bodies might be worn with toil and privation, but now their hearts were filled with hope and devotion. They could endure their outward scars once they had seen the sackcloth within upon the breast of their king. The whole aspect of life, the call to defence, and the meaning of loyalty, stood out in a new light. The irksome siege took on a glory which it had not before; and the distasteful meal of ass's head became a very sacrament of valour. It was a seemingly trifling act which the king had done, an impulsive gesture when he was at his wits' end and appalled by the horror of what he had heard. It seemed rather an evidence of weakness than a display of power. It had no immediate bearing upon the clamant needs of the moment. And yet what they had seen the people could never forget; and it was written down in the book of remembrance for the unborn generations to read.

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The ramparts of Samaria are not more confining than the circumstances by which we all are walled about. And there are times when we grow impatient and disheartened in the endless siege and stress of life's opposing forces. And it makes it worse that so often there seems to be no meaning in it all, as well as no apparent end to the conflict. The one thought in our minds often is, How much longer can I endure the siege, and carry on the fight? And God seems to sit so unconcernedly and uninterestedly remote from, and so far above, the sphere of our sorrow. We make, like the woman of the story, some poor pact to stave off something of the evil that has come upon us, and, when we find ourselves cheated and deceived, in a kind of hopeless agony we cry aloud, "Help, my lord, O king." It may be that our prayer sounds hollow and unavailing on our lips. We have seen the gleaming walls of the palace of God's glory—the starry firmament and the resplendent universe. We have seen and acknowledged the evidences of His majesty and power. But He seems to live aloof from the needs and sufferings of His people, those whom He might help if He would. And then there comes that wonderful moment of revelation when, for the first time we look, really look, and see, through the rending of the seamless robe of God, the sackcloth within upon the heart of the Father.

That is the meaning of the death of Christ. We know not what mysteries of evil made war upon the gracious purposes of God, and laid siege to His designs of good. We know not what monstrosities

of malice arrayed their might to thwart the working of His good will and to overthrow His counsels and decrees. But God the King and Ruler of the universe came up upon the ramparts where the fight was fiercest, and when, in the rending of the veil on Calvary, men looked through to see what hidden glory was there, they saw sackcloth within upon the heart of the Father, and for the first time realised with an amazement of wonder that God is love. "Look unto Me all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved." "And the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh."

What an interpretation of the darker meaning of life was that! How the hearts of men have gone out in loving loyalty and glad obedience to such a King! How different the aspect of the siege and the weariness of the warfare! To those who see it superficially, the death of Christ, the rending of the robe of His flesh, seems an evidence of weakness. There seems to such an one nothing in that sublime act which can help the desperate need of perishing men. But the people have looked and looked, and that rent which revealed the inner heart and nature of God has been the greatest evidence of power the world has ever seen. Where men thought there was but blind and unpitying might, they have beheld the sackcloth which veiled the sun, and have realised of the King of kings, according to those tremendous lines of Blake, that

"Till our grief is fled and gone
He doth sit by us and moan."

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We would never have known what was really within upon the heart of God, if it had not been for the rent made at Calvary. But through that gash of Golgotha we have looked, and, behold, at the heart of all things, not a blind force, but a suffering Father. If we are still without a completely satisfying explanation of life and death, we have got a sublime expression. If we have not got that which will enable us to see through the sufferings of this mortal state, we have got something better and more serviceable for our daily use, that which will see us through. Now we comprehend that imperturbable peace which kept strong and steadfast Him who came from the bosom of the Father. Now we know how He could sleep quietly in the boat when the storm was raging. Now we understand how, in the same night in which He was betrayed, He was able to give thanks, because He knew that His soul was always in the hands of a Father and King like that. When face to face with cunning and unscrupulous controversialists, when confronted with all the might of his adversaries, when cruel men were taunting Him in His dying agony, Jesus was sure of Himself, because He was sure of the Father.

That rending act of the sympathy and love of God with His suffering children, whereby His inmost nature was revealed for all eyes to see, does not end the siege of sorrow for us, but it makes us brave to bear it, and in part helps us to understand it. Earl Lytton, poet, diplomatist, and Viceroy of India, in a letter written to his father, expressed the new power and peace which came into his life with

his realisation of this truth of the suffering of God with His people. "Such a Divinity would have as much need of Humanity, as Humanity has need of it: and without such reciprocity of need, what active relations can there be between God and man, or what sufficient explanation of man's existence? To the less exacting appeal of a God all good, but not all powerful, my heart and soul fly open in a flood of tears, and I involuntarily cry, 'Yes, Father! I understand. Thou needest my love even as I need thine. Thou, too, although thou art above it, hast to contend with evil, in order to save me who am beneath its influence. Help me to help Thee, and here or elsewhere to fight in Thy cause for Thy Kingdom, against all the powers of darkness. For surely this is what I was born for?'"

This glimpse of the hidden sackcloth has been the turning point of many a life, taking it from among the weak and querulous, and sending it forth to some post of valour on the wall. It would be futile to imagine that any single line of thought will ever enable us to enter into a full and satisfying explanation of the mystery of Calvary; and the fact that it has challenged the best human thought from its own day to ours without the last word being said by any about it, suggests that its glory is as many-sided as life itself. But there are many who have seen its significance most sublimely and compellingly as the rent through which the sackcloth appeared for one revealing and ever-to-be-remembered moment in the world's history, the sackcloth which rubs upon the heart of God so long

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as there is still any sin and suffering among the creatures whom He made in His own image. The mystic is here at one with the man of affairs. "The Mystery of the Cross," confesses Dora Greenwell, "did not, it is true, explain any one of the enigmas connected with our mortal existence and destiny, but it linked itself in my spirit with them all. It was itself an enigma flung down by God alongside the sorrowful problem of human life, the confession of Omnipotence itself as to some stern reality of misery and wrong." There are many devout and honest souls who cannot find any rest or comfort in the old penal and satisfaction theories of the Cross. To such these theories appear distorted, unreal and distasteful. This much we can say simply, truthfully, whole-heartedly, and without a trace of evasion or juggling with words, that in His pouring out His soul unto death Jesus was not displaying some new spirit, but the eternal Spirit who is behind and in all history. The Cross was but the rending of the garment that all might see the sackcloth of shame and suffering and sympathy which the King had been wearing from the first hour when the hosts of evil had mustered about the city of Mansoul.

Life, with all its sufferings, from the imposition of the ass's head, to the weariness and wounds, becomes an entirely new thing to the man who has seen how deeply it has affected Almighty God. If for nothing else, a man will bless the Cross of Christ for revealing to him that fellowship of sympathy. His spirit will leap out to the service of a King

like that. He will not only honour God as his Ruler, but love and adore Him as his Comrade in suffering and his Leader in the fight with the forces of evil. His whole being thrills at the thought of serving a God Who is Himself wronged and insulted by the triumph of evil, and Who suffers with His suffering subjects.

That rending of the veil on Calvary must ever remain something of a mystery. And yet its meaning grows plainer and profounder in proportion as we share the suffering, and shudder at the sin, of the world. It was to those upon the wall that the sight of the sackcloth on their king came home with such meaning. And it is those who have taken their stand upon the wall of defence, to preserve the moral and spiritual well-being of society, who can best appreciate the meaning of the display upon Calvary. Prior to any theological approach to the Cross must be the practical acceptance of it in all its implications. This was part of the secret of the wonderful way in which the sight of those wayside crucifixes in France gripped the imagination of the men who were fighting and suffering there. There can be no doctrine of the Atonement that is not mere words for him who has not somehow felt the rub of the sackcloth on his own flesh, who has not endured something of the shame and suffering of the Cross in his own little life. And on the other hand one has never found that it is necessary to labour any doctrine of the Atonement to any who have suffered vicariously for the sins of another. All that is necessary is to hold up, either in actual

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semblance the crucifix, or in such words as one can muster, the wondrous Cross and the thrice wonderful Man upon it, and to say, "God loved the world like that." And the suffering, wrestling, agonising soul sees, and is satisfied.

That Hebrew king, seeing the desperate plight of his people, did not speak one word that was half so eloquent as that of the rending and revealing. And they altogether mistake the Christian revelation who think of Jesus, as so many tend to do to-day, mainly as a healer or a teacher. Such an estimate, however sympathetically, reverently, and beautifully it may be presented, does no sort of justice to the historical interpretations of Jesus, which have all, with one accord, contemplated Jesus first of all as a doer rather than as a teacher, and most of all in one supreme deed. The people saw the sackcloth and they were saved; for they gave their hearts to a God and King like that. It is not the Sermon on the Mount so much as the Sacrifice on the Hill that will save us to-day. We must build our tabernacles, not upon the Mount of Transfiguration, but upon the Mount of Disfiguration—where His visage was so marred more than any man. In these days when things every bit as horrible as the boiling and devouring of their own sons by the women who bore them, are happening in our world, you must have a tremendous gospel to meet a desperate need. Something has gone far wrong, and it is no time for spinning bloodless theological theories of the Atonement or trying to preach in the terms and phrases

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of a bygone day. Calvary means this, if it means anything, that the fight is so serious that the King Himself has had to come up on the wall, and has been wounded. If we need God badly, He needs us too. If you are sickened with the welter of things around you, come to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Don't stop at the ass's head, or the devouring of widows' sons, or even at your own wounds, or you will go mad. Behold for your salvation the sackcloth within upon the heart of your King. Come and behold it in the sacrament of the broken bread and the poured forth wine. Behold the eternal love of God displayed at Calvary, that love that will not let us go until He has brought forth judgment to victory.

REV. ADAM W. BURNET, M.A.

REV. ADAM WILSON BURNET, M.A.

Son of the late James Burnet, Torcraik, Cam-buslang. Educated at the High School of Glasgow; graduated in Arts at Glasgow University, 1906 (Honours in Classics and Blackstone Medallist in Greek). Licensed in 1910 after Divinity Course in Glasgow United Free Church College. Ordained at Queen Street Church, Tayport, Fife, 1911. Inducted at King Street Church, Kilmarnock, 1914; Giffnock Church, Renfrewshire, 1920; and Westbourne Church, Glasgow, 1924.

THE MARRIAGE-FEAST

REV. ADAM W. BURNET, M.A.

"The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son. . . ." Matt. xxii, 1-7.

TOWARDS the end of the Pilgrim's Progress, when Christian and Hopeful are safely over the River, they are sped by the Shining Ones to their journey's end, and amid the blowing of trumpets and pealing of joy-bells are welcomed by a heavenly host into the city of God. The Dreamer looks in after them with longing eyes at that sunny, golden place, and says in well-remembered words, "Which when I had seen, I wished myself among them." It was to stir some such yearning in men's hearts that Jesus drew His pictures of all God has to offer to the soul of man. "A certain KING," He says here, holding out to needful men the wealth and splendour of the Divine resources, God's royal magnificence in giving. We remember the prodigality of Nature—the "immeasurable laughter" of the sea, as a Greek poet has it, the endless beauty of the earth, and how the sun pours down upon it a hundred million times more light than it can take. He whose name from of old is Redeemer works on that lavish, opulent scale. "Thou openest Thine hand," says

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the Psalmist. "O the depth of the riches," says Paul.

And this King, the story goes, had a "FEAST" prepared, and the word is plural, signifying a celebration lasting perhaps as long as a week. Joy and satisfaction and fellowship continuing from day to day—this was religion as Jesus knew it, a thing of happy faces and constant gladness and fulfilment, and this, in the word He uses, He offers to a world in which, to quote Von Hügel, "the reality, the awful potency and baffling mystery of sorrow, pain, and sin abide with man across the ages." "A MARRIAGE-FEAST," He says, envisaging an occasion of peculiar happiness when two hearts, made one, put on their crown of joy. The festival in the parable is there to celebrate the marriage of the King's Son, and men are bidden to lift up their hearts and rejoice because Jesus Christ has made common cause with mankind. Oneness with men was the ruling passion of His life. Through all His ministry it expressed itself in "the loveliness of perfect deeds," but how vivid the word "marriage" in this sense has become since the Teller of the story sealed the bond on Calvary where, as W. R. Maltby says, "He betrothed Himself for ever to the human race." "Because I live, ye shall live also." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" The anxiety of the King that not a guest should miss the feast is evident in his urgent and repeated invitations. Time and again the messengers go forth calling and pleading, and we cannot but think at once of the grave and earnest voices, some

whispering, some crying aloud, that all through our lives have besought us to give heed to God. Has He not pleaded with us in visions of truth and beauty, in memories of the blessed dead, in a night of stars, in the examples of goodness we have known, in hours of sacrament, in all the love we have received, in our failures too—to name only these ?

“ I

Have had my times when, though the earth did wear

Her selfsame trees and grasses, I could see
The revelation that is always there,
But somehow is not always clear to me.”

Our eyes and ears have missed much, but our lives have been beset by the solicitations of God. “ Earth’s crammed with heaven ! ” Above all, we have only to look at the face of Jesus Christ to see to what lengths the beseeching of God will go—no stone unturned, no labour of love undone, no pain too hard to bear—if only we will come.

There, then, on the one hand are set the goodness of God in all its amplitude and availableness, and the intensity of His desire that the whole human situation should be met, and, on the other hand, the incredible indifference of which mankind is capable. “ They made light of it ! ” In what stark contrast do these two things confront each other here—the passion of God and the airy unconcern of men ! “ Oh, that invitation to the palace ! ” said the guests. “ Well, of course, it was extremely good

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of our friend to spend all that money and put himself so much about, but isn't it rather a fuss to make? After all, there's many another thing much more important." "And they went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise." So great is the power of the things that are seen to preoccupy the heart of man. Some concern for these things is legitimate enough. The work of the world must go on. It is all a question of perspective. Our great need is a decisive sense of values. The world our senses tell us of is there all round us, coming up close to us, so inviting and persuasive and importunate, with such power to impose upon the imagination as to appear the only real world. Who does not know the pull it has? All through Scripture, as in the words before us, there is heard what is like nothing so much as a piercing cry of alarm, lest what is seen crowd out and displace what is unseen and we become deaf to the pleading of our only hope. What care are we taking?

"O purblind race of miserable men—
How many among us, at this very hour,
Do forge a life-long trouble for ourselves
By taking true for false, and false for true!"

The doom of destruction visited upon guests whose one offence was that they declined, though flippantly, an invitation to a feast, may seem excessive and unfair; but Jesus has in mind the fearful retribution He sees coming to engulf the Holy City. That doom He views not as the retaliation

of God, but as the solemn penalty that sin works out for itself in a moral universe. He is speaking in full view of the Cross. His words in that last week of His life have a stern and peremptory ring. But moral stringency did not suddenly betray itself in His voice because death drew near. He was always telling men that to leave God out of one's life spells disaster in the end. He spoke of "the light that is in thee," and we all KNOW that love is better than hatred, that kindness is better than selfishness, and that honour is better than treachery. We all have some kind of conscience, the secret voice that protests when, knowing the better way, we choose the worse. But it is possible to stifle that protest, to go on ignoring it, until, this being a world where one thing leads inexorably to another, the guiding voice is silent, so that a man does with ease what once he would have shuddered at. That surely is a haunting passage at the end of "*Romola*," where a noble woman looks back on the life of the husband who had wronged her. "There was a man once to whom I was very near, so that I could see a great deal of his life, who made everyone fond of him, for he was young and clever and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind. I believe when I first knew him he never thought of doing anything cruel or base, but because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant . . . he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds, such as make men infamous." "He abhorreth not evil," says a Psalmist of the last phase in a soul's undoing ;

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and Jesus said, " If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

Nor must we ever forget that the choice is left with us. The King issues an invitation, not a command. He does not drive in His guests ; he invites them. So God takes the place we give Him. He will never desert us, but neither will He break into our hearts. " How can I give thee up, how can I let thee go ? " He cries to us ; but it is left to us to decide. He can come to us only in answer to some prayer of need. Once, John tells us, a strange sound was heard at a critical moment in Christ's life, and adds that some imagined it was a distant rumble of thunder, others that it was an angel's voice. It is a solemn thing to think how it is laid upon us to say whether the longings and compunctions that visit us at times are the very voice of God, or are due to what we call natural causes. When men came to Jesus with a question, how often He pressed it home upon themselves for answer ! " Who is my neighbour ? " for instance, a scribe once asked, and it is as if Jesus said to him, " Now I am going to tell you a story, and meanwhile YOU will be making up your mind." Then follows the tale of the Good Samaritan, whereupon Jesus puts the man's own query to him, " Well now, which of them was neighbour ? " It was characteristic of Him to say, as He must have said often, " How think ye ? " " Why judge ye not YOURSELVES what is right ? " " Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee ? " God confirms, corroborates, supports and blesses our judgment

when it is given. He will leave nothing undone to assist our decision, but the "Yes" or "No" is for us to say.

Well, what have we to say to these things—the great love of God as it is proved to us in Jesus Christ, the power of the world to seduce and enslave us, the weakness of our hearts, and the choice it is always ours to make? What can we do but say, like Bunyan's man in the plain vigour of his self-surrender, "PUT DOWN MY NAME"—praying "O God, I give myself to Thee again. Search me and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

REV. J. T. FORBES, M.A., D.D.

REV. J. T. FORBES, M.A., D.D.

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THE HALLOWING OF DISCERNMENT

REV. J. T. FORBES, M.A., D.D.

*"They are not wise, nor do they understand
this or consider their latter end."* Deut. xxxii, 29.

WHAT is meant in this passage is not, in the first instance, death, but the outcome of present conduct. The desire is that the people should have some discernment as to their future—what their destiny is ; what they will miss if they fail of fulfilment. That this is true can be seen from the whole view of the motives and sanctions appealed to in this song ; they are temporal and material. The other life is not considered. What is to be considered is the blessed estate of the obedient—health, prosperity and freedom are their portion—and the miserable estate of the disobedient—disease, war and slavery are their portion. All this is the outcome of reflection on prophetic teaching and national experience through long years. The poem belongs to a period many centuries later than that of Moses ; but the teaching it enfolds is not peculiar to any period, whatever may be true of its form, which is probably exilic ; it is the burden of many prophetic complaints. Again and again the charge is brought against the people that they did not consider : this was their condemnation.

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The power which is summoned to a worthy use here is thought, discernment; perhaps it would hardly be unfair to call it imagination. The people are asked to give full weight to every appeal made to them; to realise in mind what the things spoken mean; to let their thoughts move freely in the regions opened up to them by the prophetic forecast. They were either to be examples and so message-bearers to other nations, or a deterrent and a warning. As they were loyal to their mission or not, so would their future be. The call to this play of mind, this serious pondering of things, especially of courses of action, is surely universal. The discerning and the undiscerning attitudes to the world and life, the possession and the non-possession of the power of forecasting issues—these things are always with us. Religion asks for the hallowing of the power of thought, of consideration, of discernment in every realm to which we have access.

We are besought to consider the world around us. The heedless do not really know the world in which they live. The prophets praise the knowledge of the birds and the beasts in comparison with the moral obtuseness of men; the stork knew when to migrate, the dove, the swift and the crane obeyed the laws of the seasons and of their own natures, but the people were heedless of the law of God. The world will not give of its dearest secrets to the careless. "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." The heavens need to be considered, the lilies need to be

considered, before the greatness of the one, or the loveliness of the other, can be truly known. The business of consideration, of pondering things, of observing them with patience and expectancy, is to bring fact out of the unseen into the seen. It is when we turn aside to see the great sights of Nature that God makes things known. The believer in the revelations ready to be made to watchfulness is the man on the way to discovery. Because he believes, he sees the glory of the universe and of the God of the universe. The self-centred thoughts of men kept them for centuries from seeing the greatness of the world. They did not believe that they belonged to a scheme so great as the reality. They had not sufficiently considered the heavens, the work of God's fingers. When they did they found themselves to be inhabitants of a new and larger world—the world of the infinitely great.

Consideration is leading us to-day to understand a little of the significance of another world than that of the heavens—the world of the infinitely small. Its immense importance is only indeed beginning to be understood. The seeds of disease and the helpers of health are both in minute forms of life. The discoverer of the microbe of malaria wrote :

“ Seeking His secret deeds,
With tears and toiling breath,
I find thy cunning seeds,
O million-murdering Death.

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“ I know this little thing
A myriad men will save,
O Death, where is thy sting ?
Thy victory, O Grave ?

“ Before Thy feet I fall,
Lord, who made high my fate,
For in the mighty small
Thou showedst the mighty great.”

This is what a hallowed consideration, a sanctified discernment can do. It can “ save a myriad men ” ; it can make knowledge deepen faith. Some advance in mental and moral good has often accompanied material discovery. It has seemed as if, when men were ready to hallow its use, a new power was put into their hands. But it has not always been so ; rather has mankind pressed forward to grasp an unsanctified gain. The compass that opened up the fields of the world to just enterprise opened them up also to conscienceless exploitation. The enhanced power of production, that carries with it specialisation and interdependence, has been accompanied by loss of general capacity and loss of interest ; real life has been impoverished. The meaning of the mastery given to us was surely enrichment on all planes. Now the conquest of the air points to the formation of higher units than nations, and to the building up of human society as a whole. But have we yet shown a true appreciation of the meaning of this power ? It was war, not peace, that made the first great use of the

powers that should have linked men into a living unity. Into the Kingdom of God the nations are to bring their glory and honour; and, amongst other glories, the glory of insight and invention. He that cannot consider these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that we were purged from our old sins of pride and exclusiveness when Christ redeemed all men.

We are invited to consideration of the world within us, to apply thought, discernment, to all that makes character. The New Testament is full of invitations to such a proceeding. We are to do it in helping others to be what they can be. "Consider one another to provoke one another to love" . . . in restoring those who have failed: "Considering thyself also lest thou also be tempted"; in taking advantage of every example of spiritual nobility: "Consider how great this man was"; above all, in our attitude to Jesus Christ Himself: "Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession." Concerning all that goes to our mental and moral upbuilding, the counsel comes to observe, to think, to consider.

"Raw haste" is the foe of a true view of ourselves or of others. The centurion's warning to the chief captain who was about to scourge the Roman Paul, "Take heed what thou doest," is one applicable to every set of circumstances in which we are in danger of being misled by bias or passion. Our need is to see clearly. Error and sin are many a time the result of hasty and superficial views—short views—of life. God's law and God's love both

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need consideration. Men do not take long enough views. Knowledge cannot be won by impatient people. The fever of hurried minds leads men into sin. "My people perish for lack of knowledge." They do not see things as they are. St. Paul is not slack in drawing up an indictment against his countrymen; yet he puts their main crime down to ignorance. They missed wisdom, "which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." There is a wisdom of the soul which comes to those who wait on God. If the rulers had possessed it, if they had known what they were tempted to do, Paul says, they would never have done it. He says the same thing about his own sin: "I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." Sin is the action of the short view, the imperfect knowledge, the thing done without consideration. "My people doth not know, Israel doth not consider."

We ought to have a programme for the whole way. This is what I mean by long views of life. What we think and do, to be right, ought to fit into life as a whole. It ought to be the thing to do in view of the completion of the course, something that, when we sit down and examine it, bears review. No form of sin ever can bear that.

"Is the pleasure that is tasted
Patient of a long review?
Will the fire joy hath wasted
Mused on, warm the heart anew?"

The blackest crimes have been committed by men who refused to place themselves at the standpoint of "a long review." The men who poisoned Socrates, and the men who stoned Stephen, acted as they wanted to act at the moment, not as in after moments, or in after years they would wish to have acted. And of the greatest crime of all, the putting to death of Jesus Christ, Peter, as well as Paul, asserts: "And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."

Ignorance of this sort is culpable, because it is the child of impatience and passion. You can review your life now and find a crowd of actions that you would never have done if you had sat down and counted the price in the after sting of conscience. There is infinite mercy for this sin-begetting inconsiderateness. The Lord Christ remembered this in His prayer for forgiveness for undiscerning souls: "They know not what they do." And the thought that gives us hope should give us charity. An immense amount of the world's evil is wrought because men are unimaginative. They do not know themselves. They know what their animal man, or their distorted mind, wants; not what the man God would mould within them wants. They are morally uninstructed. They do not know their own nature when they squeeze other men hard, and tell untruths, and hurt their own souls in order to make money fast. They do not consider. In ignorance they do it. "Take heed unto thyself" is not a counsel for pastors only. It is necessary for every man. Consider yourself,

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watch your own soul, study your nature, if you would be a spiritual success. If you can see the course you want to take now, as it will appear in twenty years' time—is it one you will determine to take? You want—whether you feel it or not—motives of action that last to-day and to-morrow, and next year and next life. This is perhaps one reason why the true life is called in the New Testament the “life eternal.” The acts built into it are good now and for ever. They will bear the “long review.”

We cannot shut out from any real consideration, forecast, the pondering of the undeveloped in destiny. A great deal of religious thought is anticipation; it is prophetic. This is one of the most practical things in life. The mind that can wisely anticipate holds sway in the world of men. It is so in ordinary business life. The man who can anticipate a requirement, who can be just in front, and yet not too far in front of his fellows, is the successful man. In a larger sense it is true of social welfare. But it has deep personal application. To see action in its issue, and character in its ripeness—this is the work of faith. There is a future before us which has its own standards of value, its own fitnesses and affinities. The beginning of capacity for the life of that world is the test of the rightness of life here. There is a human standard, a normal man, One who meets alike the craving of the heart and the demand of God. “All judgment is committed to the Son.” It is true that not judgment but salvation is the work Christ came to do, yet it results from

His presence in the world. Moral beauty judges deformity ; righteousness judges evil ; love judges hate, even as it keeps silence and bears all things. So men range themselves in groups as Christ moves through the midst of them.

“ If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged.” What is wanted is to face reality, and to face it now. Christ is Saviour. “ He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.” By trust we link ourselves to Him ; there is a secret transaction of the heart with Him. For pardon, for health of soul, for enlightenment, for fellowship, He gives Himself to us. We have His word ; but we have more—Himself. We are not dealing with the history of a gracious teacher who is now nothing but a memory. The purpose of all Scripture and all testimony is to lead to contact with the Lord Who is the Spirit. Hear His own speech : “ He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Amen.”

REV. OLIVER CHASE QUICK, M.A.

REV. OLIVER CHASE QUICK, M.A.

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THE ADVENT GOSPEL AND MODERN SOCIETY

REV. OLIVER CHASE QUICK, M.A.

"Ye turned unto God from idols to serve a true and living God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." 1 Thess. i, 9, 10.

"That ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, even as we charged you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without and may have need of nothing." 1 Thess. iv, 11, 12.

"WAIT for God's Son from heaven." "Study to do your own business." How are Christians to combine their hope of heavenly life with the duties of their earthly livelihood? Advent reminds us every year of that problem which has confronted the Christian conscience since the Gospel was first preached.

Certainly in the early days it was the heavenly hope which was put first, and constituted the main message of Christianity. Jesus Christ had overcome sin and death, and risen again to bestow upon His followers the power of His victory. From henceforth they had eternal glory laid up for them in the heavens; and ere long they would inherit it to

the full at the second coming of the Lord. To understand the whole effect of that message, it is necessary to remember that the world to which the Gospel came was in bondage to the fear of death, and longing to be assured that some kind of immortal or eternal life was a real possibility for man. The mind of that time was on the whole not at all materialistic, in the modern sense of that word. It did not at all find its wants satisfied in this present life, in material comforts or enjoyments. The political peace and religious toleration established by the Roman Empire did not bring spiritual content. Men grew more and more weary of the changes and chances, the little joy and much unhappiness, which life seemed to offer ; and they were often a prey to gloomier fears of spiritual powers which ruled this world and made humanity their plaything. They fashioned for themselves all kinds of obscure mysteries and occult rituals, if by any means they might attain to some standing-ground in eternity, or lay hold on some hope of immortality which would lift them above the one grim certainty of bodily existence.

To those then who accepted it the Gospel came as that glorious message from the beyond for which they had so long been vainly groping. Change and decay were not the last words after all. There was one who had risen. And moreover the way to partake of the deathless inheritance of his saints was not to belong to any secret society teaching some terrible and hidden knowledge whereby dæmonic powers could be cheated ; it was to

believe in and follow a loving and human Saviour, and to wait for him in simple loyalty, until His final triumph should be revealed.

But what of earth meanwhile? As we should have guessed, the Christians were inclined to neglect it and its affairs. Their new-found joy carried them off their feet. This world and everything in it was on the verge of dissolution. Let it go. Thus, many of them began to live in a state of exalted idleness, and to cease to take their share in the ordinary work of the world. Economically they were living on capital, a course which, as a modern writer has pointed out, is only to be commended when one is sure that the world will come to an end before the capital.

But this neglect of what was earthly inevitably did harm to the spiritual and heavenly side of the Christians' life, and marred their very fellowship with Christ. Not occupying themselves with ordinary affairs, they were apt to become restless, excitable, unbalanced, prone to empty talking and to the manifold eccentricities into which those who have lost their anchorage in daily business so readily drift. Hence it comes to pass that in the New Testament, side by side with the glorious gospel of heavenly life and of the unimportance of all earthly things, we find passages which teach a different lesson. Christians must carry on their ordinary work, must not give up useful trades, must not be unproductive, or become busybodies or parasites on the community. Several exhortations in the Epistles, besides that which I took as my text, have this

general intention. And it is worth noticing that, if we take the marginal rendering of the R.V., the last verse but one of the Epistle to Titus runs as follows: "Let our people also learn to profess honest occupations for necessary wants, that they be not unfruitful."

Christianity still has the same double message for us in the twentieth century. But we shall not read it aright, unless we perceive the great difference in outlook between the ancient world and the modern. The ancient world held in comparatively low esteem the possibilities of earthly life. The fear of death, the hope of immortality, were among its dominant emotions. There has been a tremendous change. To-day that fear and that hope are perhaps less influential than they have ever been in the history of the human race. More and more we tend to believe that this world, if only its affairs could be better organised either by social reform or by revolution or by a wise conservatism, would be found to contain in itself all the satisfaction which human aspirations can legitimately demand. Instead of disparaging this world as incurably tainted with evil, we disparage the other world as altogether visionary and unreal. And the ills of this world could be better remedied, we imagine, if only good men would give up paying so much attention to the next.

And what result has been brought about in practice by this swing of the pendulum in man's soul? The early Christians' neglect of the affairs of the earth impaired their citizenship in heaven. Men were

unfitted for the true communion with God through Christ, by an excessive concentration on the other world. To-day perhaps we are learning that the converse is also true. Neglect of the other world mars and spoils the life of this world. To seek for none but an earthly peace and blessedness leads where? To strife and imminent starvation.

Such in part may well be the lesson of the centuries of scientific progress which have followed that period of the Renaissance, when the eyes of the human soul were first diverted from heaven to earth. We have set up an enormously complicated structure of industrial civilisation which seizes our energies and almost drives them to find their chief aim in the affairs of a material livelihood. Science meanwhile gives to those who possess material wealth the enjoyment of a power of which our ancestors never dreamed; so that we may forget our spiritual slavery in visions of an ever-extending sovereignty over earth. And yet even so we are not allowed to be comfortable. Ignore heaven as we will, wars, international and industrial, are still teaching that a society which puts material livelihood first must in the end find even a material livelihood unobtainable. For men when they have ceased to believe in God cannot believe in each other; and not believing in each other, they destroy, through striving with each other, the very wealth for which they strive.

To-day then we must put a different emphasis on parts of the apostolic message. St. Paul had to tell people who believed in the glorious reality of

heaven to work with their own hands, to earn their livings and to produce. We have to point out to people who believe in producing material wealth (however much their opinions as to the right method of production may differ) that even the life of this earth can never be really happy or prosperous until once more men believe first in God. The history of modern civilisation seems likely to furnish a grim commentary on the text, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

But what is the real value to us of the other-worldly message which Advent brings? What does it mean to wait for the coming of the Lord? Few of us to-day take literally the expectation that the Lord will one day descend from heaven with the sound of a trumpet. And even if we did, what difference precisely should it make to us now?

One meaning of the message is this. The love of God manifested in Christ is the strongest power in the universe. To speak of that power as God's love means that it had not its source in space or time or what we call evolution; nor will it have its end when the earth's course is run. It springs from the eternal being of God Himself, and therefore, whatever happens on this little planet of ours, it is triumphant, triumphant perhaps even through that quality of self-sacrifice which our experience shows us to be its most effective weapon. Whoever takes that love as the guide of his soul has at his back the power which made the world and will complete it.

That is an other-worldly message, but it is a

message which is intensely practical. If we believe it, we shall never imagine that industrial strife will be ended merely by pointing out the incalculable loss of wealth which strikes involve, or that international strife will be ended by drawing ghastly pictures of what must happen in war. Such methods are ineffective because their appeal is to fear. Now the emotion of fear is very uncertain in its effect upon conduct. When vehemently stirred it is just as likely to issue in violent ferocity or in paralysis as in sober caution. The history of criminal justice and of the ecclesiastical doctrine of hell is enough to show that fear of consequences has only a very limited effect as a deterrent. And moreover that very emotion of fear is the principal cause of strife. Men, like many other animals, are most hostile when they are most afraid. The rattling of the sabre is often caused by the trembling of the hand which holds it. In spite of what cynicism may teach, it is the confidence of trust which as a rule disarms suspicion.

But our confidence can only escape make-believe, it can only be clear-sighted and strong enough to endure, if it is a confidence founded on God and willing, even in great tribulation, to wait for the power of his love to bring good out of evil in its own most wonderful way. Just in proportion as we have God's love in our souls, we do more than wait, we make ready the way for the victorious advent of his Son. And as we study to do our own business by the help of that love, we take our tiny part in the one great revolution, that which lifts earth to heaven and brings heaven to earth.

THE VERY REV. J. ARMITAGE ROBINSON, D.D.

THE VERY REV.
J. ARMITAGE ROBINSON, D.D., F.B.A.

DR. ARMITAGE ROBINSON was born at Keynsham Vicarage, Somerset, in 1858. He was educated at Liverpool College and at Christ's College, Cambridge. He was Fourth Classic and Second Chancellor's Medallist in 1881, when also he became a Fellow of his College. In 1893 he was appointed Norrisian Professor of Divinity. He became Canon of Westminster and Rector of St. Margaret's in 1899, and Dean of Westminster in 1902. Since 1906 he has been Lord High Almoner to the King. In 1911 he retired to the less arduous post of the Deanery of Wells with a view to continuing literary studies.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST AND ITS INTERPRETATION TO-DAY

THE VERY REV. J. ARMITAGE ROBINSON, D.D.

“ The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? ” 1 Cor. x, 16.

THE supreme mystery of our Faith is expounded alike by St. Paul and St. John as consisting in such an intimacy of union with our Blessed Lord as can be adequately expressed only in such language as “ We in Christ and Christ in us,” “ I in them and they in Me.” It is this supreme mystery that underlies the Institution of the Holy Eucharist.

St. John tells us how our Lord sought to prepare the minds of the disciples beforehand by the startling words in which this mysterious participation of Christ is presented in terms of spiritual food and spiritual drink. “ I am the living bread which came down from heaven : if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever : and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” “ He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.” “ He that eateth Me, even he shall live because of

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Me." Strange and harsh the sayings sounded, though it was plain to all but wilful misinterpreters that they could have no literal and material explanation. To have given a portion of His natural body and blood for them to eat and drink was an obvious impossibility; nor could it in any case have conveyed to them that spiritual sustenance—that life eternal of which He spoke. "The flesh profiteth nothing," He presently said; "the words that I speak unto you are spirit and are life."

On the eve of His Passion, when the Body and the Blood were about to be separated in a sacrificial death, the same high mystery of personal union with Him was presented to the disciples in acts that spoke louder than any words. It is of these acts, repeated in Christ's name, that St. Paul writes: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" And he goes on to connect the Body thus given and received with that larger Body of the Christ, through which Christ still lives and works on earth—the Body of which we all were made members when we were "baptised into one Body," when we thus "put on Christ" and came to be "in Christ." Even as then we were made to be in Christ, so in the Holy Eucharist Christ comes to be in each of us, and thus makes us not only one with Him but also one with all the members of His Body. "For we being many are one bread, one body: for we all partake of that one bread."

If St. John's thought is more particularly con-

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cerned with the appropriation of Christ by the individual, St. Paul has been led by the experiences of his difficult mission to lay a peculiar stress on the corporate life of the Church. But in both the ultimate principle is the same—"We in Christ and Christ in us."

In the light of this principle we look more closely at what the Lord did on the night before He suffered. First, He hallowed the bread, following the familiar course of "blessing" or "giving thanks": "He took bread and blessed and brake it." So far there was nothing strange: the act was familiar in every Jewish household. That which was new and surprising was what He said as He began to give a portion of the bread to each of the disciples. "Take," He said, "this is My body." So presently He took the cup and gave thanks, and as He bade them drink of it He said, "This is My blood of the covenant." He was about to leave them. His bodily presence was to be withdrawn from them. But they should not lose Him. A nearer intimacy should unite them to Himself. He would be no longer *with* them, but He would be *in* them.

The circumstances of the Institution should be enough to tell us that the Body, which Christ declared that bread to be which He held in His hand, was not the identical physical body in which He sat among them at the table. Once again He was speaking of that Flesh and Blood of which He had said before, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." Only now the mysterious appropriation of Christ was expressed in

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acts, and not merely in words. He assured them that, as they ate the bread and drank the wine which He blessed and gave them, they verily ate and drank His Body and His Blood. It was His Body, because He gave it to them as such, and they took and ate it as such. Thus was His promise fulfilled: "He that eateth Me, even he shall live because of Me." And thus St. Paul could write of it in after years: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Thus far I have sought to show, first of all, that our interpretation of the Holy Eucharist must be based on the fundamental mystery of our salvation—on that appropriation of and union with the Lord Jesus Christ which is summed up in the words "Christ *in* us." Secondly, that our inquiry as to the relation between this mystery and the elements of food and drink in the Sacrament must start from the words of our Lord as presented to us in St. John's Gospel. What did our Lord mean by "eating the flesh of the Son of man and drinking His blood?" Surely not something which would be the same as eating a portion of His actual body—whether as there present, or as crucified, or as raised and glorified by a spiritual change. It could be only that which the "body given" and the "blood shed" stood for—the power of His sacrificed human life—if we may venture at all to put it into words. Must not the mystical meaning of this "flesh" and "blood" give us the clue to the Body and Blood of the Eucharist? Thirdly, we were thus led to a statement on which (whatever they may desire to

add) all Christian men agree—save only those who persist in seeing no more in the Sacrament than a bare sign or symbol. That which Christ then gave with His own hand to each of His disciples, that which they received from Him, was verily and indeed, according to His words, His Body and His Blood—that same spiritual nourishment of which He had said: “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have in yourselves no life.”

When Richard Hooker put forth in 1597 his Fifth Book of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, he prefaced his treatment of the Sacraments by a careful exposition of the doctrine of the Incarnation, with a view to the further doctrine of the mutual union between Christ and the believer. His expressed intention was to emphasise that spiritual value of the Eucharist on which the three contending parties of his day were all agreed—Romanists, Lutherans, Calvinists (for by this time Zwingli’s denials which reduced the Sacrament to a mere symbol were retracted or obsolete). He doubtless might have gone further than this intention led him. But he was satisfied to urge the truth of the communication of the Body and Blood in the faithful reception of the consecrated bread and wine, and to leave controversy on other points aside, as distracting men’s minds from the height of so sublime a mystery.

It is true that Hooker’s statement has seemed to offer too subjective an interpretation of the relation of the Body and Blood to the sacred symbols, which are, as he calls them, God’s powerful instruments for conveying to us the blessings of the Sacrament.

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But I do not think that he would have found fault with the form in which I have endeavoured to state the common ground of universal agreement—a form which emphasises the “given-ness,” the given or objective reality—apart from our acceptance—of that which is here offered to us. For this “given-ness” finds full expression in the long line of Anglican divines who came after him, and is clearly indicated in our 28th Article, which says: “The Body of Christ is given, taken and eaten, in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner.” The point to which I desire to call attention is that Hooker goes on to say: “Take therefore that wherein all agree, and then consider by itself what cause why the rest in question should not rather be left as superfluous than urged as necessary.”

His times allowed of this. The special challenge he had to meet was not from Romanism or Lutheranism. It was from those who were seeking to introduce the Genevan Discipline and overthrow thereby the settlement of the English Church. Transubstantiation and Consubstantiation he could leave on one side; for these were not now in question. The English Church position in regard to them was not being challenged by those whom he was concerned to oppose.

But more than this—and it is of the first importance to observe—no reservation of the Sacrament was then sanctioned by the Church of England. No question therefore arose as to the nature of such of the consecrated elements as remained over after the Communion was ended. Moreover the interval

between Consecration and Communion had been as nearly as possible eliminated by the change which placed the Communion immediately after the recital of the Words of the Lord at the Institution. There was therefore no practical reason for an elaborate discussion of the nature of the consecrated elements considered in themselves, as distinguished from the gift bestowed by Christ through the medium of the elements.

For more than three hundred years the position of the Church of England in this respect has remained practically the same. But the case is altered to-day. We are now being challenged to consider uses of the Sacrament that are new to us—uses not quite unknown before the separation from the Roman Church, but very greatly developed since, till they have come to include new cults or forms of devotion.

The gradual reintroduction in our midst of the very ancient custom of reserving the Sacrament for communion of the sick has produced a new situation. The reverence naturally observed in regard to the sacred elements thus reserved has awakened new thoughts and stirred unwonted questionings. It has seemed obvious to say, Here is the Body of Christ ; and, wherever it is, there Christ Himself is present in a special sense as He is not present elsewhere. From this it is easy to go on and to say, Here therefore the faithful may present themselves before Him in adoration and in supplication : and, if the faithful individually are thus privileged to meet with Him and worship Him, why should they be precluded from paying Him an open and united

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homage, or why should not His Sacred Body be held up to their adoring gaze as His blessing is pronounced upon them? Thus by gradual steps we are being led half-unconsciously, by what seems an irresistible logic, into forms of devotion profoundly different from such as are commended to us by the formularies of the English Church.

Lest I should seem to do injustice to those who urge this line of argument, I will quote the recent words of one who is perhaps the ablest and most learned defender of what has come to be called the Anglo-Catholic Movement.

“The notion that the sacramental presence of our Lord remains during the actual time of the celebration, but ceases if the sacrament is reserved after the celebration, has no support from authority or reason, and cannot make a lasting appeal. The doctrine of the real presence, as Dr. Pusey and Mr. Keble taught it, leads on inevitably to the belief that, if the sacrament is reserved, our Lord is still there with His sacramental presence, and still is to be adored. To say *Adoro te devote* to our Lord at the consecration in the Mass, and to say the same words to Him when kneeling before the reserved sacrament, is in principle the same act of devotion.”*

I am not here concerned to criticise the line of action taken by those of my brethren in the priesthood who are endeavouring to guide men's minds along the course which I have been describing. Still less am I suggesting that Reservation for the Sick should not be provided for with due restrictions

* Darwell Stone, *Faith of an English Catholic*, p. 52.

at the present day. I am not directly burdened with the grave responsibility for the discipline of the Church which complicates the problem for our fathers in God.

I am here to plead that in the region of thought and theology the case of the Church of England as hitherto set forth by her great divines should not be allowed to go by default ; that the best and devoutest minds among us be brought to bear upon the problem, not only in its historical but in its religious aspect ; that we may be helped to think the matter out afresh in all the light that has come to us in the spiritual and intellectual developments of the past three centuries and a half. I am well aware that theologians elsewhere have already sought to help us ; but it is to Cambridge that I must needs appeal for its own distinctive contribution.

I know that much thought has been expended on the question whether the Body and the Blood, which as we all agree are communicated to us in the Holy Sacrament, are to be thought of only as the Body and the Blood which were sacrificed on Calvary ; or whether their presence in connection with the consecrated elements is not more easily explained if the Spiritual Body of the Ascended Lord—that is the same Body once crucified now glorified—is the substance of the Sacrament. But this does not go to the heart of present anxieties, which are less concerned with the nature of the Sacramental gift in itself than with the attachment or relation of the presence of the Body to the consecrated bread at any moment other than that in which it is given by the

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Lord as His Body and received from Him as His Body.

I am suggesting that we may rightly go one step beyond Hooker's famous negative pronouncement : " The real presence of Christ's most Blessed Body and Blood is not therefore to be sought for in the Sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the Sacrament." Something more objective than these words imply would seem to be demanded—something that guards more adequately what I have called the " given-ness " of the spiritual food, apart from the use which we may or may not be able to make of it. May we not say that, after our prayer to God that He will accept our Oblation and make it to become to us the Body and the Blood of our Saviour, in accordance with the Words of Institution to which we solemnly appeal as the ground of our expectation, these elements are consecrated, set apart from all lower uses, ready to be employed for the supreme purpose of communicating to us the Body and the Blood, as the present Saviour gives them to us as such and bids us receive them as such ? Does not this correspond to the words : " Take and eat : this is My Body," " Drink : this is My Blood ? "

But have we reason to extend their meaning to any portion of the bread and wine which He blessed and which He did not actually give to His disciples—whether lying on the table before the moment of giving, or remaining after He had given to each His portion ? And if not, is not that which remains over to-day to be revered simply as the Hallowed Elements ready for His further use, when they are

brought to the sick man's bed, and when again He gives them as His Body and His Blood? Need we, I ask, go beyond this? Nay more: have we any warrant in His words or the words of His Apostles for going further? When we have answered this question, it will be time to ask whether the great Fathers of the Church, to whom we are taught to look for guidance in interpreting the Sacred Scriptures—whatever the occasional utterances of their fervid devotion may suggest—do indeed give us any substantial ground for such a conception of the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of the Lord in or under the species of the bread and wine, as could justify us in accepting as a true development those Eucharistic doctrines which lead to the extra-sacramental devotions of which they in their day knew nothing at all.

It is full forty years since I preached my first University sermon in this place. In those days our great theologians had laid deep foundations alike in historical and speculative theology. But the problems of the Eucharist were not among those to which their strenuous labours were devoted. Our difficulties are in the main other than were theirs. But the temper of their studies is surely with us still. Have we no message for the times which shall reflect that temper, intense, sober, devout? Can you tell us whether the logic which seems to compel us step by step towards the ultimate stages of these new devotions to the Reserved Sacrament is really applicable to the deep mysteries of the spiritual world? whether at some point it

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ceases to apply, or whether we must go back and question the premisses from which it has been made to start? Are the issues to be judged by the standard of apparent helpfulness to individuals? or is truth—the true conception of God in His relation to man—endangered for the general mind of the Church by the encouragement or the tacit allowance of these extra-sacramental devotions?

It is for a reconsideration based on fundamental principles that I would plead; and I appeal more especially to those of our younger Cambridge theologians who are earnestly endeavouring to revive the truly Catholic ideals of doctrine and devotion in our midst. Look to it, I pray you, that your foundations are truly and soundly laid; lest in a flood of providential reaction much of that which you are building be presently swept away.

REV. CHARLES W. GORDON, D.D., LL.D.

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GOD'S ETERNAL QUEST

REV. CHARLES W. GORDON, D.D., LL.D.

THE history of religion has been described as the story of man's search for God, more correctly it might be described as the story of God's quest for man. For religion is indeed the reaction in man's heart to God's pressure upon him. It is an old story, the oldest of all human stories reaching back into the ages before the foundation of the world. The Bible is the story of this age-long quest of God, its "why" and "how" and "with what result," and in no place in the Bible but one, is the story better epitomised than in the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, and the exception is the fifteenth chapter of Luke's Gospel.

For sixty years the people of Israel have been in exile, but now the day of their deliverance is come and the opportunity is given them to return to their own land. In the face of that opportunity the prophet wonders "will they all come back?" Deep in his heart is the passionate desire that when the day of return dawns, every man, woman and child of Israel will be on the march. Well he knows that sixty years of life in Babylon have left their mark upon the people. They have grown into Babylon's life, into Babylon's work and pleasure,

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come to peace? They have been feeding on that which is not bread, upon vain traditions of statecraft, of outworn diplomacies. They have flung from them the Bread of Life, which is the truth about God. "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice. . . . Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of His throne." Not armies and navies, not cunning combinations of powers. Righteousness alone exalteth a nation. Nations that feed upon the falsehood that God may be safely ignored will make little of that rightness in international relations which alone will bring peace to the world. God is. God is right. God is Holy. God is King. Let the nations feed themselves upon this truth and they will not so readily rage nor imagine vain things. Nay rather, then shall all kings fall down before Him, all nations serve Him. Then too, shall there be some concern for "the needy when he crieth," for "the poor also, and him that hath no helper." Let the nations feed upon these strong truths and they will grow strong to dare the right when it seems dangerous, and to stand for the needy in the face of those to whom God and Right are mere words.

So too, within the nation. The phenomenon of the world to-day is unrest in the heart of every nation. Unrest, political, social, industrial, and the cause is everywhere the same—heart-hunger. Their peoples have been feeding upon that which is not bread. Untrue thoughts about God and about man have been their soul food. Consider the great nations, even those nations that conceive themselves pre-eminently the Christian nations of the world,

those Anglo-Keltic nations, Great Britain and the United States of America. Proud of their race, of their political liberty, of their culture, of their commercial supremacy, of their moral standards, yet they cannot find a way of peace. They cannot settle down to their work. Strife between class and class, social upheaval, pride, envy, hate, eating the heart out of the nation. Why? They have been feeding upon untruth about God, and about man. They have been told that God may be safely ignored, that it is a matter of indifference what men think about Him, or whether they think at all about Him. That He is a mere name, a symbol, or at best an absentee remote from human affairs, without power to hurt or help. If God be such, then man is helpless, the plaything of blind and terrible forces that lie within his world. He is helpless in the grip of the passions that sleep within his own nature. He has to fight a lone fight and a losing fight, for these hostile powers are eternal and relentless, and man's powers of resistance and inhibition are steadily decaying. Unguarded, unprotected, uncontrolled, man stumbles blindly, helplessly, along to a destiny of defeat and despair. It is to meet this desperate need of man that God has sought him out by Providence, by conscience, by prophets, poets, sages, to make him know the truth about God—that God is right, that God is near, and that God is kind, that He is accessible to men and seeks their good. This is the meaning of all the manifestations of the Divine in nature, in history, in the heart of man, and most completely in Him Who is the Word, the revelation

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of God as Father. This truth about God is soul food, of which, if a man shall eat, he will come to rest and strength.

As about God, so about man. No man can think untruly about God and think truly of man. The man to whom God is a mere name has little hesitation in exploiting the weaknesses, the needs of his fellow-men. This is the fruitful source of injustice, tyranny, oppression, cruelty, on the heart of a nation. The nation that forgets God will soon fail to remember man. The prophets that proclaimed God as the Righteous and Holy One, proclaimed Him also as the Friend and Champion of the poor and needy. To Him the poor man cried, in Him the needy found help. The man who believes the truth about God cannot exploit the weaknesses of his fellow-men. "Eat ye that which is good," cries the prophet, "and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Fill your minds and hearts with truth about God and your fellow-men, and you shall grow into peace and comfort and strength.

Having caught the ear of his people, and arrested their hearts, the prophet makes the discovery that they are not yet ready to adventure the desert, that they have not yet the heart to return to their desolated land. There is a grave and serious difficulty in the way, and that difficulty lies in their lives and hearts. During sixty years Babylon has gripped them. Babylon's ways of living, Babylon's ways of thinking, have set their mark upon their souls. During these sixty years there has been little to recall them. No annual pilgrimages

to the Holy City, no Temple services, no sacrifices. The environment of their souls has been Babylon, the atmosphere which they breathe has been that of the great luxurious, pagan city. The old men strong in faith who had been carried from their native land, ruined and broken because of the nation's sin, are lying somewhere beneath Babylon's dust. Sixty years changed young men of twenty to old men of eighty, boys of ten to old men of seventy. The effect of exile is written in their very souls. The very suggestion of returning to their native land awakens within them a consciousness of unfitness, of uncleanness, of unrightness. They have wandered into Babylon's wicked ways, they have thought Babylon's wicked thoughts. The call to return to their native land, to their ancient faith, with all its lofty ideals, its heart purity, its holiness of living, fills them with dismay.

II

Like rain upon the desert fell the prophet's gracious words: "Seek ye Jehovah while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, let him return unto Jehovah. He will have mercy upon him, He will abundantly pardon." Thus this is the second lure the prophet offers, A CLEAN HEART. Forgiveness is a fundamental doctrine of the Hebrew religion. Jehovah as holy and righteous demands holiness and

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righteousness in His people. There are those who fail, and failure means distance from God, misery and guilt. But for those who fail there is a way of return to God, there is mercy for their misery, pardon for their guilt. It is a distinctively characteristic doctrine of our holy religion that for the sinner there is with God forgiveness, there is mercy for his misery, pardon for his guilt. In no other religion in the world is this doctrine to be found. "I am not sure that it is safe to say," replies Socrates to a student, "that the gods can forgive sin." And he is right. In the religion of Socrates there is no place for forgiveness of sin. And it would be dangerous to Greek morality and Greek faith to seek to find a place for such a doctrine in their religious system.

How forgiveness can be possible even in the Hebrew philosophy of religion is not always clear. Therein lies mystery, but the pathway to pardon is clearly defined. There is no uncertainty in the pronouncement of the prophet: "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." The sinner must be done with his evil way of living and his evil thinking; for the man who wilfully continues in the way of sin or who deliberately gives harbourage to wrong thinking, there is no pardon. Forgiveness is no white robe to fling over the sinner and his sin. That pure robe of righteousness falls only upon the man whose wicked way of living and wicked way of

thinking are already purged with passionate hatred of sin, and purged with penitence. This is the glory of our Christian faith, that for the vilest, the lowest, the most abandoned, there is mercy for his misery, there is pardon for his sin, and there has been opened for him a way of return to the Father. But he must love cleanness more than sin, or the door of return to God he closes with his own hand.

The clean heart. Well the prophet knows and well God knows that only men with the clean heart can avail for the thing that awaits them. It was a true psychology that sent the knight of mediæval days to his knees in vigil before the altar, ere he set forth upon his knightly adventure. Only the heart purged with penitence from all wicked ways and sinful thoughts could adventure the high quest to which the knight was pledged. Well the prophet knew that only men loathing Babylon's ways and Babylon's thoughts, hating them and burning to be free of them, would face the terrors of the desert, or endure the long bitter struggle with briars and thorns, in their native land. Only the man who feels the horror of sin and is filled with the dread of it will cry: "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God." And only such a man is prepared for God's service. For sin in the ways of a man and evil thoughts in the heart of him choke the avenues of approach to God and deprive him of the Divine strength. The breast-plate of righteousness covers the heart purged of the love of sin.

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III

The prophet is wise with the wisdom of God in that he keeps to the last, the noblest, the most potent of all the lures for the heart of man. He has offered them a satisfied heart. He has offered them a clean heart, and now he offers them that, which for the high heart is the supreme of all noble passions. He offers them A LAND TO REDEEM. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree." Come back to God, he cries, come back restored and clean, come back to redeem your native land from the desolation which has fallen upon it by reason of your sin. During these sixty years of exile the woodlands are choked with thorns, the paths and ways for man's going are obliterated with briars, the olive yards and vineyards, the cornfields and the pasture lands lie waste and destroyed by the overgrowth of foul and noisome weeds. There is work to be done for your land before it can become the prosperous and happy home of God's holy people. This work of cleaning up the land can only be done by those whose land it is. It is your land and Jehovah's land ; only from this land as a base of operations can you fulfil God's high purpose in your own great destiny. You must make the land safe for your children to live in, safe for your people to live in. Its paths must be made free for children's feet to press. It is a great task, no more noble task is offered to the sons of men. It is the mightiest of all appeals to great souls and brave hearts.

Fearlessly the truth must be faced that this is no task for men with soft hands and weak hearts. The thorns will cut and the briars will tear. But there is no other way. The path for all redeemers is sown with thorns and briars. Those who would save their land from all disfiguring and desolating things must be prepared to suffer. No easy path for saviours has yet been found. When God would save the world He found that it was necessary that He should choose the Pathway of the Cross. And all who would associate themselves with Him in this work of saving, He plainly says, must be prepared to take the Cross and follow after Him.

But the briars and thorns, praise God, can be torn up and burned. The woodlands and the cornlands and pasture fields can be redeemed. The blood and tears spent in redemption will make the land a blessed place, in which others may dwell in peace and strength. In the woodlands clear of thorns the fir trees will grow tall and straight and strong, the fir trees out of which men can build dwellings, or make ships to sail the seas and conquer worlds. Where the thorns were, the myrtle trees will bloom, trees of fragrance and beauty. It is God's will that our land should be a place where our sons grow up like fir trees, into men clean and straight and tall, and our daughters, like myrtle trees, sweet, fragrant, beautiful. And these our sons and daughters shall be to the Lord "for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."

REV. J. HARRY MILLER, C.B.E., D.D.

REV. JOHN HARRY MILLER, C.B.E., D.D.

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GOD, THE JUDGE OF ALL

REV. J. HARRY MILLER, C.B.E., D.D.

"To God the Judge of all." Hebrews xii, 23.

LIFE is complex and difficult to handle. In these intricate times it has become "one tumultuous whole," and the trend of its way is hard to see. But it is still possible to set it in the "light everlasting," and to view it from that standpoint. It is still possible to come in spirit and in truth to "God the Judge of all," and to judge our national life and industrial controversies in the holy light of God. If we are able to do this we shall return to our daily work nobler and stronger men and women, able to help and not apt to hinder the solving of the hard problems which press in upon every thoughtful mind. To this duty we are recalled by the familiar words before us.

"Ye are come," says the writer of this so rich and gracious letter, and he names the places and powers and persons to whom the Christian soul draws near, "Ye are come to Mount Zion, to the city of a living God, to hosts of angels, to the Church of the first born, and to God the Judge of all." The first readers of these words felt the rich majesty that was in them, all the more because the outward and

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ornate ritual of the Old Testament Church in which they had been trained was calling them back. Here was something inward, nobler, grander than all that the Old Testament offered ; and, shining through it, unchanged and loving, the Living God.

All religions claim to bring God and man into living relation to each other. That faith which most truly effects its purpose strengthens its claim to be the true faith. And in this passage the writer claims that the faith of Jesus Christ opens wide the way of approach to God. He speaks of the near access to God which Jesus secures for men, as closer and more intimate than that which the Old Testament offered. He leads out his argument with strong and carefully chosen words, and the phrase which we study now is part of that closely knit argument. We need not linger over the "setting" of the words ; it is beautiful in its form and fashioning ; but our concern is with the phrase itself as we note in it :—

(1) What worship is—"Ye are come to God."

(2) What God is—"The Judge of all."

(1) There is deep need in every age for this act of reverence. And our time requires it urgently. It is no light and easy matter to come to God. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." In these latter days some men have tried to banish the thought of God. They would either politely bow Him out, or scornfully cast Him out. In ordinary speech they seldom name Him ;

and when He is named by anyone, the mention of Him is regarded with a tolerant amusement by the worldly wise and little minds of our day. These men would leave this truth to the ignorant and unlearned, as fit only for such minds.

“Leave thou thy sister, when she prays
Her early Heaven, her happy views ;
Nor thou with shadowed hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days” :—

So sings Tennyson in his “*In Memoriam*” ; and there is just a suggestion in the words that religion is for unthinking, rather stupid people, something that will vanish at the first breath of criticism or questioning. Such people are occasionally met. One will tell you that he has outgrown the need of God—poor, silly, little brain ! Another fears that there may not be a God, and in the sorrow of it falls silent and sad.

And yet another kind of mind is met ; a noisy scoffing mind that boldly and ignorantly laughs at the very thought of God. It is easy to laugh so when life is sunlit, and all seems gay and secure. But grey days come ; the cold shivering winds of sorrow come ; and our hold on life is shaken. Then, through the door closed in our foolish days, God comes back in His mercy, that we may “come to Him.”

Brothers, we cannot live aright without God. For a little while we may seem to carry on well enough ; but soon our day of need will come, and we shall find no help, no strength, no guidance in

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man. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We shall feel then our need of God.

This forgetting of God has been notable of late in certain quarters. Pride in human power and intellect has fostered a very shallow way of thinking. Thoughts of food, clothes and money fill the whole minds and time of many men; and the nobler part of them is starved and shrivelled. Men all round us drift away from God. The nation drifts away. In some circles of men it is "bad form" to speak of God. In others it is a matter for jesting. It is "old-fashioned."

As one grows older one learns the far-spreading nature of this disease of godlessness. For one thing, it stunts the true growth of the soul. It is only in the nourishment of a living faith in a living God that human personality expands and grows to its full stature. The dwarfed minds of to-day, handling great issues *without God*, have sadly bungled the matter in hand, and have wounded the soul of our nation. It is because they are themselves ungrown and stunted for lack of God that they cannot recognise the divine in man. They treat man as merely human, and therefore all goes wrong.

For another thing it stifles the soul's longings. Our souls, if they are to rise to their true nobility, must spread their wings in God's free air. As a bird soars to the sky, so the soul of man rises to God. "In Him we live and move and have our being." But to forget Him is to cage the soul, and close it in a dull prison.

In Plato's Republic there is told the parable of the men who spent their lives watching the shadows on the wall of their cave, and who, when one of their company escaped into the world of reality and brought back word of the true state of affairs, laughed him to scorn. They were content with shadows, who might have handled and seen reality. And so they stifled the adventurous and inquiring soul that would lead them out to nobler enterprise. The parable has meaning still. The liberating of man's soul is God's holy work, who stirs the longings in our souls that He may satisfy them with His mercy.

For a third thing, it hardens the heart. Man is all too easily content to ignore or forget the sufferings of his fellow-men. He is apt to be hard on others. There is a root of bitterness in us, and we grow callous to the pains of others, so long as we ourselves are comfortable. Human hearts are seldom tender when they are godless. Coming to God—bending in God's presence—allows the soul to grow and to expand, and keeps the heart tender and compassionate to other men.

This is one of the many gracious effects of true worship. In the calm presence of God life is seen in its true perspective. In His true holiness all untrue, petty, belittling thoughts wither and die. Life and its duties assume a new nobility. "O, come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker."

(2) But the word goes deeper, and tells what God is in one aspect of His nature—"the Judge of all."

GOD, THE JUDGE OF ALL.

We have rightly emphasised in later years the tender aspect of the character of God—His mercy and His grace. But there is another aspect of Him. God is love : and love can flame and blaze. God is holy, and in His presence sin and selfishness and selfish strife stand out stark and clear in their ungarnished naked hideousness. God is true, and His judgment is unerring and final.

It is right for us now to bring to this judgment-Presence all the troubles and perplexities of the times in which we live. The eyes of this Judge look down and have been looking down upon the long years of unworthy inaction in our nation. We are painfully conscious of generations of terrible neglect of many of our fellow-men. Do not ask whose fault it is, without also asking what "God the Judge of all" thinks of it. We have drifted into bitterness and quarrels, mainly, as I think, because God has not been remembered and feared and loved by us all. But "the Judge of all" is looking down upon employers and employees, upon leaders and unions and parliaments, and on the whole country. It is when this powerful truth is grasped and understood in some measure that a ray of light falls upon our path, and the sense of hope reawakens in our souls.

To the Apostles this truth shone clear. The Church of Jesus believed that a holy Father would commit judgment to the Son. In the clear atmosphere of His truth all excuses and evasions would shrivel and fade, and our action and inaction stand out in their inherent selfishness. Here is the one hope for Society and for men now.

Take this shining truth with you and let it lighten each phase of our social and industrial life ; and the angry petulant spirit is awed into penitence, remembering that it is that very arrogant and angry mind *on each side of every dispute* which brings about the troubles which are so frequent to-day.

God is "the Judge of all," and "He judgeth righteously." To keep truth : to remember the brotherly covenant : to know that all our life will come one day for scrutiny before God's holy eyes—that it lies there "naked and open to-day"—this is a salutary and cleansing truth. And the knowledge of it will help us, if we really believe it, to be calm, patient, self-controlled in all our ways, and to consider our lives and our duty in the light of eternity.

It will call us to a more devoted service of our fellow-men, and a more compassionate care for their needs and sorrows. The scene of judgment drawn by our Lord Jesus will waken in us concern lest "inasmuch as we did it not to one of these His brethren, we did it not to Him" ; and will set us to our work with the eagerness not of slaves, but of children who are content to leave the issue of their work in the sure hands of their Father, who is "God, the Judge of all."

REV. ROBERT F. HORTON, D.D.

REV. ROBERT FORMAN HORTON, M.A., D.D.

SON of the Rev. T. G. Horton, born in London 1855. Educated at Tettenhall, Shrewsbury and Oxford. Took a First in Greats, and was elected a Fellow of his College. Entered the Congregational Ministry in 1880; built the church at Lyndhurst Road, Hampstead. In 1893 he was the Lyman Beecher Lecturer at Yale, which gave him the D.D. degree. In 1903 he was Chairman of the Congregational Union, and in 1905 President of the Free Church Council. He has continued his work at Hampstead until now.

GOD SUPREME OVER EVIL

REV. ROBERT F. HORTON, D.D.

"I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil, I am the Lord that doeth all these things." Is. xlv, 7.

THIS is one of the staggering texts of the Bible ; for it seems to attribute to God the evil of the world. Are we to explain it away as a half-truth which is merged in the broader truth of Christ, or can we find in it a help in dealing with the greatest difficulty in human life, the problem of evil ?

"I form the light and create darkness." That we can gratefully accept. The alternation of light and darkness has its very beautiful and consoling aspect. Night is in its way no less welcome than day. "Press close, O warm-bosomed night," says Walt Whitman ; night with its myriads of stars which are hidden by day, opens the universe on our view. In the heat of an Indian noon, how grateful is the cool dark room in the bungalow, from which the rays of the sun are excluded ! When night with "dewy finger draws its gradual veil" we have a sense of peace, and a hope of rest, which is a delight hardly less than the joy of the dawn, and the upspringing to a new day. The darkness is necessary to the appreciation of the light ; and

we can heartily praise God that He made and maintains them both.

Nay, if it were said, "I make life and create death," we should not complain. For sweet as life is, there is a mysterious and alluring sweetness also in death. That famous picture of Dürer's, "*Der Todt als Freund*," reminds us that for many forlorn and failing souls death is a beautiful release. *Mors janua vitæ* expresses a feeling which comes to us all at times. We do not wish an indefinite continuance of terrestrial life. The time comes when the future calls, and we arise gladly from the banquet of life, to go to the upper room, where is the bridegroom with His feastful friends.

"After life's fitful fever he sleeps well," says Cordelia of her passion-torn father.

"After life's battle," said Arrian, "God, like a good general, sounds the recall."

We may even say that Death is good, as good as Life, because God makes them both. It is His order, wise and merciful.

But that God should "make peace and create evil" staggers us. Does it only mean that He allows suffering and disaster to befall men? "Shall evil befall a city and the Lord hath not done it?" asks the earlier prophet Amos (iii, 6). Is it only physical pain, or loss, or calamity, evil in the non-moral sense, that we are to refer to God? Or must we include moral evil in the statement, "I create evil"?

Let us try to think it out, in order to find the relief that is hidden here. In the place and time of the writing of this chapter the Persian Dualism

was dominant. According to Zoroaster there are two principles always in conflict. Ormuzd is the god of light, Ahriman the god of darkness. Between these there is perpetual alternation, as between night and day. Good and evil contend in an interminable equipoise.

And, though Christian theology can never speak of two gods, it has tried to escape the problem of evil by referring all moral evil to a Prince of this world, who commands the powers of darkness, and wages a too-successful war against the Prince of Light. But the Christian dualism is always relieved by the truth that Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and that we shall finally beat down Satan under our feet, and Satan himself with his satellites will be cast into the lake of fire.

But against this dualism, this prophet, writing when Jerusalem was in ruins and the people of God were in exile, raised the protest: there is only One God, "I am the Lord that doeth all these things."

With an unflinching hand he grasps the thorny question of evil, and declares unreservedly: There is One Supreme Power—God. That one holy God says: "I make peace and create evil."

This is a heroic monism. It must not be held thoughtlessly or lightly; else the distinction between good and evil would vanish. Pantheism in the long run is Atheism under a more specious name. If evil is conceived as the work of God's hands, to oppose it becomes futile and even impious.

But if we will think of it calmly and searchingly

this clear prophetic word relieves the tension of the perpetual conflict between good and evil. God who made light made also the shadow, which is darkness; yet He Himself is only Light, dwelling in light unapproachable. And God, Who is only good, made man, in His own image, a moral being, imperfect to begin with, but to grow to perfection like His own, by the exercise of choice. Man's moral nature grows out of discrimination between right and wrong—an Authority bids him choose the good, but leaves him free to choose the opposite of good. Thus God creates evil in the indirect sense that He has made a being that is able to do right or wrong. When man does wrong—that is evil. And God is responsible for it in that He does not immediately destroy the wrongdoer, but maintains him in life—the wrongdoer would immediately perish if God withdrew His Spirit from him—and often allows him to continue through long years of deepening and hardening and unrepentant evil.

The being that in scripture is called Satan or Devil or Apollyon—the fiend who hates, the adversary that accuses, the slayer who destroys, the souls of men—was made by God, made not as he became, but made capable of becoming what he did become. And by God's permission alone he is left to practise in this sphere of human life. Probably the Book of Job is the key to this baffling patience of God with a rebellious and fallen angel. Satan appears among the sons of God, the accuser of the brethren; and he is allowed to test and try and torment God's faithful servant; but he is under the strictest

limitations ; he cannot go one step beyond what is allowed ; he is not permitted to injure Job, but only to strip him, and to bring out his integrity ; he means evil but does good. Job emerges from the furnace as gold refined.

Now if we can keep steadily before our minds that God is only good, and intends the complete and eternal triumph of good, we may gradually grasp the thought that evil is only a negative in the formation of moral character. As darkness is the negation of light, and yet has its part to play in God's order, so evil is the negation of good, and yet is tolerated for the good which comes out of its defeat, the good which is made in the perpetual struggle. It is useless and misguided to deny evil, which only gains in power when it is camouflaged or excused. Evil is a fact, a dread and hateful fact. It is fatal to confuse it with good, or to tolerate it because the greater good comes out of it. That greater good only comes out of it by fighting it, by conquering it, by destroying it. And yet, whether it proceeds only from the misused and perverted will of men, or from intangible and invisible rulers of world darkness in high places, it can and must serve an end which is good. God is supreme over all, and God is only good.

In the light of the value of moral growth and achievement, in the fact that supreme goodness is attained by heroic and triumphant wrestling with evil, we get a glimpse of a solution of the problem of evil.

" See I put before you good and evil ; choose ye

GOD SUPREME OVER EVIL

this day." This is the language of scripture and of nature. God is speaking alike in both. For us men life is always a choice, a large choice determining the general principle and the main trend of life, and a daily choice of details. Character is formed by the succession of choices. All nature is the scene, and all opportunities are the occasion, for those decisions, the choice of good as against evil.

See how we are made ; see the environment in which we are placed. Our physical organism is a system of delicately balanced functions, which can easily be perverted and corrupted. The noblest passion in us seems to spring from the same source as lust. The choice we make, often in our earliest days, determines which is to flow from that fountain, the cleansing waters of life, or the mud and the slime of pollution.

Again, everywhere in nature are intoxicants. The juices of delicious fruits produce them. The wholesome grain by which we live may be fermented. Alcohol is presented to all men under various guises of allurements.

Gold is hidden in the rocks and streams ; and the *auri sacra fames* is the constant spring of evil in human life. As human beings we are easily bored ; and though our time is so short, we are always seeking to kill it. To escape the intolerable *ennui* we turn to games and to the excitement of gambling. For effective gambling we need not wait for horses or football. Unhappy man can catch the fever and perish of it from the trifling events of the day. This is the very quality and complexion of the world

in which God has set us. There is no compulsion to evil, but there is everywhere the opportunity of it. The choice is singularly free, and is kept free except so far as we fetter ourselves by our habits. But God in Nature, as in Scripture, is offering to us all and always the choice: "Choose ye this day," is the challenge of life. Our life is all a test and proving. The world is a factory of noble natures. For all nobleness comes from choosing the hard good instead of the easy evil. Goodness is a victory, an achievement of right choice persisted in.

The most sacred and exquisite thing on earth, that which is likest God, is that love which comes from the springs so easily abused. Faithful, selfless love is the sublimated passion which might be merely lust; choice sublimates it. Alcohol is a temptation, but there is much to show that it is the triumph over alcohol that makes a strong and valiant race. Drunkenness can only weaken and destroy a people. But a nation that can defeat or defy the temptation will probably lead the world, as Islam did for centuries until, yielding to other vices; the temperate race became weak as others.

And the gambling craze may be sublimated into that spirit of adventure for good ends, which Dr. Nansen ranks with courage as one of man's greatest characteristics.

Everywhere goodness is the victory over evil. In this life which we are called upon to live, we do not see how the great qualities of which man is capable, courage, patience, tenderness, compassion, self-control, could ever be produced unless there

were spiritual foes to wrestle with, hard disabilities to overcome, impediments in the way which require all our strength to remove.

And as God has made the plan of human life, and formed the world in which the process is achieved, we must attribute to Him the conditions in which the contest goes on, in a word the evil by subduing which the highest good is gained. "I make peace and create evil" begins to be an interpretation of life, and may reconcile us to many things against which, in the struggle, and the onset, and the frequent defeat, we are tempted to rebel. Would we have good without achieving it? Would we shrink from the fought field in which the victory is won?

Now, if we can rise to the height from which this prophet surveyed life and human affairs, we may see that the world and history are not, as Zoroaster thought, an interminable tussle between good and evil, in which the advantage sways now to one side now to another, but a sure and steady advance of good from age to age, in dispensation after dispensation. Evil is always being overcome. Good is always emerging out of the victory. "Overcome evil with good," is the law of progress, the law of God.

That larger, truer view of the world has become more possible for us than it was for a prophet in the fifth century B.C. The sweep of time is for us much longer—the universe much vaster. All records of the past, back to Palæolithic man, tell the same story of advancing good and vanquished evil. The future opens up to us in a vista of indefinite progress.

There is no evil in life which we may not successfully assail. There is no good in thought or imagination which we may not hope to attain.

God over all ; and God all good. Evil transitory, serving a purpose in His great plan ; but incapable of final victory, doomed to vanish in the Eternal Light, which it cannot endure.

It seems at first a bold thing to say that God creates evil. But it would be a bolder and utterly disastrous doctrine to maintain that evil is here without His intention, or to admit that either man or devil can ultimately frustrate His will.

THE VERY REV. J. H. HERTZ, PH.D.

*THE VERY REV.
JOSEPH HERMAN HERTZ, Ph.D.*

CHIEF RABBI of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire. Was born in Rebrin, Czechoslovakia, September 25th, 1872. Emigrating to America as a child, he was educated at New York City College, Columbia University, where he took the degree of Ph.D., and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He was a Rabbi in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 1898 to 1911, and during the Boer War was expelled by President Kruger for pro-British sympathies, and for advocating the removal of religious disabilities from Jews and Catholics in the South African Republic. From 1906 to 1908 he was Professor of Philosophy at Transvaal University College. Dr. Hertz was elected to the Chief Rabbinate in succession to Dr. Herman Adler, in 1913. In 1920-21 he undertook an extensive pastoral tour, visiting the Jewish communities in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. He became President of Jews' College, London, in 1914. In 1925 he was made one of the Board of Governors of the University of Jerusalem and chairman of the administrative board of its Institute of Jewish studies. He also became Vice-President of the Anglo-Jewish Association, the London Hospital, and the League of Nations Union. Among other Jewish writings, he published an anthology, "A Book of Jewish Thoughts" (1917), of which seventeen editions had appeared in 1926. He was a member of the original Board of Translators of the Jewish Bible Version, 1896-1903.

FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS *

THE VERY REV. J. H. HERTZ, PH.D., the Chief Rabbi.

" This is the end of the matter ; all hath been heard : fear God and keep his commandments ; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment concerning every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Eccles. xii, 13, 14.

THE Book of Ecclesiastes, from which these sentences are taken, is set aside for special reading during the Festival of Tabernacles. That book is the strangest, and, to some people, the most fascinating in the Bible. Its reputed author, Koheleth, is puzzled by the perplexity of life, and is bored by its vanity. Man, he feels, has nothing, knows nothing, is nothing. " What profit hath a man of all his labour wherein he laboureth under the sun ? " he bitterly asks ; " the pre-eminence of man over the beast is nought, for all is vanity." Yet, from such an abyss of doubt and despair Koheleth emerges with the triumphant conviction that to do rightly is the final end of life ; nay, that it alone constitutes the humanity of man. His closing words are :

* Preached at the Hampstead Synagogue, London, on the Eighth Day of Tabernacles, September 30th, 1926.

“ This is the end of the matter ; all hath been heard ; fear God and keep His commandments ; for this is the whole of man. (The word ‘ duty ’ in the Authorised and Revised Versions is not in the original.) For God shall bring every work into judgment, concerning every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.”

A great Jewish thinker of the last century advanced the theory that these concluding sentences of Ecclesiastes at one time formed the epilogue to the entire Hebrew Bible. But, be that as it may, the words, “ Fear God, keep His commandments, for God shall bring everything into judgment,” are certainly the epilogue of all the Festivals, both solemn and joyful, of the Jewish year. They are, in fact, the culmination of the message that the Days of Awe—New Year and Day of Atonement—as well as the Days of Rejoicing of the Tabernacles Festival, bring to the House of Israel.

“ *Fear God.*” This does not mean servile dread. “ I fear God,” says an old English divine, “ yet am not afraid of Him. His mercies make me ashamed of my sins.” Man, creature of a day, is filled with awe, reverence, worship, at the thought of God’s infinite holiness, majesty and loving kindness. This, in the language of religion, is called the “ fear of God ”—humble and reverent submission of our will to God’s will. Its basis is the recognition that this world is not an infinite loom on which the shuttle of chance weaves to and fro the garment of unreason and despair. There is something sacred and sublime

“ Moving behind the world, beyond our ken,
Weighing the stars, *weighing the deeds of men.*”

And when Koheleth and all the Sages and Masters of Israel after him fear God, they have in mind no Platonic respect for our Faith, no “ fulfilling ” of the law by abolishing it, no mere theoretic attachment which at times does not exclude flagrant disregard of morality and the behests of practical religion. “ *Fear God, and keep His commandments,*” says Koheleth. In other words, Judaism has Thou shalt and Thou shalt not; memories, symbols, observances. They sweeten the life of the Jew; they link the generations in filial piety; they unify the scattered atoms of the House of Israel into one brotherhood; they are for the Jew the ladder connecting earth with heaven. And forty centuries’ experience has taught Israel that only in the faithful observance of these commandments lies the secret of our deathlessness. Whenever these immemorial rites, customs and ceremonies go, we are left without God in our lives. We may then remain an ethical, but we are no longer a religious people.

“ *For God shall bring every work into judgment, concerning every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.*” This is the crowning conviction of Koheleth. And it is well if on this, Israel’s Harvest Festival we, too, call to mind that :

“ The tissue of the life to be
We weave with colours all our own ;
And in the fields of destiny
We reap as we have sown.”

This ancient doctrine of religion has been strikingly illuminated by modern studies like the Science of Heredity. In the breast of every one of us, we have come to understand, there is a cemetery wherein we may have interred some unrighteous action of long ago. We think it is buried ; so it is. But we forget that in sins, as well as in souls, there is a *resurrection of the dead*. Dead sins wake into life, and their ghosts walk again in the land of the living. And most terrible of all, the predisposition to commit that sin does not stop with our lives ; our vices and our sins may reappear in our children to the third and fourth generation. "God shall bring every work into judgment." Even an agnostic like Huxley saw the fatal danger of failing to inculcate this solemn truth in the character-building of the young. It is for this reason that, to the scandal of narrow-minded secularists, he advocated the use of the Bible in schools. "By the study of what other book," he asked, "could children be so much humanised, and made to feel that each figure in the vast procession of history fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between the eternities ; and earns the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its effort to do good and hate evil ? "

Needless to say that the Rabbis raised these words, "For God shall bring every work into judgment," to a mighty ethical lever in human life. "On the Judgment Day," they tell us, "every Israelite will be asked : Have thy dealings with thy fellow-men been in faithfulness ? Didst thou fix times for the

study of the Torah? Hast thou hoped for the salvation of Israel? "

These are questions which a man should ask himself long before the Judgment Day.

"Have thy dealings with thy fellow-men been in faithfulness?" Especially in connection with the Festival of Tabernacles did our ancient teachers point out that we cannot steal a blessing; we cannot rob joy; we cannot filch honour; we cannot climb to heaven by trampling on our neighbour. The blessing, joy and honour must be our own, or they are nothing. And they can be our own, if we perform our life-work, not as hirelings working by the clock and only under the eye of the taskmaster, but if we perform the duties of our calling in faithfulness, yea, in love. A noted Pietistic Rabbi declared: "Whatever a man's calling may be, whether he be the Rabbi of the Community or he be a street-sweeper; whatever the wares in which he deals, so long as a man respects his wares and honours his calling—they will prove a source of sanctification to him and of usefulness to human society."

But we would entirely misunderstand the whole spirit of Judaism if we were to limit the application of ethical teachings like "Have thy dealings been in faithfulness?" merely to the life of *individuals*. Tabernacles is the great Messianic Festival, proclaiming, according to the interpretation which the Synagogue has placed upon it, the reunion of all the nations as brethren under the protection of one Father who is in Heaven. It addresses its message of human brotherhood and mutual responsibility to

states and peoples. The Prophets of old arraigned the nations of their day for the inhumanity and unfaithfulness they showed towards those weaker than they. And seven centuries ago, a saintly Jewish mystic, Rabbi Judah the Pious of Regensburg, declared: "On the Judgment Day, the Holy One, blessed be He, will call the nations to account for every violation of the command, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' of which they have been guilty in their dealings with one another."

"Didst thou fix times for the study of the Torah?" i.e. didst thou set aside of thy time and treasure for the spread of religious truth, for the strengthening and perpetuation of Jewish religious knowledge? is another question which, according to the Rabbis, will be asked on the Judgment Day. The Talmudic parable anticipates the various replies that will be made—and they are the same old excuses which we ourselves hear with our own ears, which we ourselves make with our own lips. The poor man pleads his poverty as the cause of his remissness; the rich man, the distractions of his affairs; and the worldling, the overwhelming nature of his temptations. But, surely, when the poor man to-day brings forward his poverty in extenuation of his failure to perpetuate the Torah in his home, we have a right to ask, "Have there not been other poor men who, despite their grim battle with poverty, have handed down the torch of Jewish learning and Jewish idealism from generation to generation, from century to century? nay, are there not myriads of such men—veritable Hillels—in this generation and in this

country ? ” As for the rich man and the worldling, it is but too true that often when Jews of prominence die, and we reflect how intensely they lived for their own ambition, and how heedless they were whether their children exchanged Israel’s heritage for worldly advantage—we have occasion to cover them with apologies as with flowers. And yet, cannot Anglo-Jewry point to a whole galaxy of noble sons, men of wealth and highest social standing, who *did* set aside times for the practice and the perpetuation of the Torah. “ It is possible to be a good man even in a palace,” said the noblest of emperors. In the same manner, these whole-hearted Jews have conclusively proved to the world that, where there is a will to Judaism, there is a way to lead and transmit the Jewish life ; to open the eyes of our children to the spiritual wonders of Judaism and the loftiness of Israel’s religious civilisation, and thus ensure that they willingly and gladly identify themselves with this living Jewish civilisation.

Such self-identification with Israel and his civilisation will alone fit us to answer the other Doomsday question that will be asked of every son and daughter of Israel, viz. : “ Hast thou hoped for the salvation of Israel ? ” Are we advancing the salvation of Israel and the coming of the Divine Kingdom of Righteousness ? Yea, have we, at least, taken our full share in the salvaging of Israel, when, in the terrible years after the War, the human wrecks which the Ukrainian pogroms left behind them stretched forth their bony hands unto their brethren in the West ?

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Blessed is the man who at this season of rejoicing, does not harden his heart nor shut his hand from the poor and the suffering, whether these agonise at our own door or in the hate zones and hunger zones of Eastern Europe. Whenever we overcome callousness to human misery, whenever Jewish brotherhood, human brotherhood, moves us to deeds of pity and beneficence, we experience eternity in this life, and we enrol our names among the true children of our everlasting Father in Heaven. "*For God shall bring every work into judgment, concerning every hidden thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.*" Amen.

REV. W. MAJOR SCOTT, M.A.

REV. W. MAJOR SCOTT, M.A.
(Minister of Hampstead Garden Suburb Free
Church, London).

REV. MAJOR SCOTT was educated at King Edward's Grammar School, Birmingham, Edinburgh and St. Andrew's University, where he graduated with Honours in Mental and Moral Philosophy (1903). After three years' divinity at Yorks United Independent College, he was ordained to the Congregational Ministry at Liscard in 1905. In 1909 he was appointed to George Street Congregational Church, Croydon, where he ministered for ten years. From 1919 to 1922 he was minister of Ward Chapel, Dundee, returning to London in the latter year in response to the invitation of Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church.

THE BENEFICENCE OF GOD'S DENIALS

REV. W. MAJOR SCOTT, M.A.

"And he prayed the third time, saying the same words." Matt. xxvi, 44.

"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice."

2 Cor. xii, 8.

FRUSTRATION and dereliction are experiences which all "deeply exercised spirits" must taste. Saint Teresa—in one of the delicious and inimitable phrases, marked by the quaintness of her consecrated soul, embarking on a wonderful enterprise—wrote in her Journal: "Lord, when wilt Thou cease to strew our path with *obstacles*?" And the Lord spoke to her in answer: "Murmur not, for it is thus that I treat *my friends*." At which Teresa sighed and said: "Ah, dear Lord, and that is why Thou hast so few."

It requires a sensitive and disciplined spiritual perception to be able to say with a full heart and the ready consent of the mind, in face of Divine denials, that God is still caring for the soul, surrounding the soul with an unwearied compassion and an everlasting love. It is perhaps only after years of Christian experience that we are enabled to see that the finest answer to many a prayer is a bleak denial. I do not know that anyone has written

more searchingly on the agony of prayer than Dora Greenwell. She speaks of the union between accepted prayer and the sacrifice of the human will. Most of us are ready to believe our prayers are heard when the response can be read in terms we ourselves desire ; but a very much higher form of spiritual experience is ours when we are able to perceive that the real answer to prayer is in the union of our soul with the will of God. Dora Greenwell, speaking of those lives on which God has laid so heavy a burden of pain and repression, lives so filled up by endurance that there is little room left in them for self-denial or sacrifice, says however blank and unintelligible they may be to men, their Godward aspect may be full of meaning. "Stript of leaf and blossom, it may stand bare like a cross, appealing and interceding." It is a very high ministry to which God summons us if He calls to an experience such as that.

What are we to say in face of our prayers which seem utterly to fail ? What of the men and women who feel that in their direst need God has remained silent ? There is much in the literature of to-day which, though not directly spiritual in its appeal, does enshrine the questioning, the hostility and rebellion of the human soul confronted by what appears to be Divine neglect. Much of it is genuine, though some of it, no doubt, is dramatic—even theatrical. There is not a little which suggests that the problem of a God who seems indifferent to the pain and suffering of men and women is a stumbling-block in the way of faith in countless lives. What

can we say, helpfully, to souls overweighted with pain and anguish, hunger and love ?

We do not forget, of course, on the other hand, certain loyal and regal spirits who preserve a radiancy and tranquillity of soul even in face of prayer denied. We can point to men and women who see in broken purposes answered prayers. To grow means often to suffer. We can discern that sometimes the breaking of the heart presages the birth of the soul. Or we can see that for God to give us the unpurged desires of our hearts might mean our ultimate spiritual impoverishment. There is a great word of Holy Scripture in which it is said of a nation, " God gave them their request ; but sent *leanness into their soul.*" God answered their prayer according to the very letter, but the consequence of it was not enrichment of life as they had supposed, but barrenness of soul. Anyone who is alive to the subtle and devastating passions of the human soul knows full well that we cannot be trusted to pray aright. We do not naturally and inevitably ask for those things which shall really enrich, develop and refine our spirits. The only things we can be trusted to ask for, in the majority of cases, are those which at the moment and for the time appeal to us. I do not wonder, however, that many earnest men and women who in their prayer seek to purge it of selfishness, of reference merely to their own life and private concerns, when they find their requests unanswered, discover a kind of stark indifference stealing subtly through their lives, numbing and chilling their souls. God forbid

that I should say a word which would seem to be harsh in the presence of any soul passing through such an experience. Many must fight with their heart and conquer—hiding their wound from sight. Yet I feel that we ought to emphasize the fact that the place and power of persistent importunate prayer is often disregarded. When I read in the New Testament the words, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint," I sometimes marvel how few of us practise this persistent intercession. I do not mean, Are we always on our knees? are we always using a form of supplication? but rather, Is our whole daily life surrendered to the holy and perfect will of God? Are we "praying always and *watching* thereunto?" The truth is that many of our prayers have been answered, but we have not been on the watch; we have not had the spiritual alertness to interpret the fulfilment when it came. We expected the answer in one particular form, God gave it in another form; and because of our spiritual blindness we never perceived the real response to our cry. Many of us complain that God leaves our prayers unheeded when, had we been spiritually alert, we should have seen the answer long ago.

It seems to me that we learn from the example of our Lord Himself that prayer may be a progressive agony. If prayer is easy and delightful to you, mistrust its depth and sincerity. Prayer may be, and ought to be, the native breath of the soul; but if we know nothing of unutterable longings, of a certain passion and pain in our prayer, be sure we

have never plumbed the depths. Think of the agony of Gethsemane. It was a progressive agony and yet it was a progressive achievement which led to final victory. The way of your moral and spiritual progress may lie through the very thing *denied* for which you asked. With my New Testament in my hand, with the experience of Christ laid bare before my gaze, I cannot doubt that to the trusting soul, even though the tortured heart be half broken, the end of all must be well on this side of death or beyond death. . . . Let us learn to pray more from the innermost soul rather than to give utterance to superficial desires. One thing is quite clear to my mind : prayer of this character means a deepening communion with God, and such communion means growing in knowledge of the Divine will, and such knowledge means life which is life eternal. Your life will develop in this deep, rich, full sense only in so far as you come to know God—as you are brought more and more into that passionate communion of soul with soul. That is life—and the Puritans knew it. With all that can be said against them, the Puritans have justly been characterised as men who in very deed understood and felt that at all moments they were in contact with God. Have we this sense of intimacy in our communion with God which gives us the conviction that although our prayer may seem to be denied, God is really answering it in a fuller, finer, richer sense than we dared to dream? Sometimes, I believe, in an experience of this character there comes a flame of insight and spiritual discovery at

which our soul for the moment stands aghast. We believed that in the granting of our prayer precisely as we prayed evidence of God's good will could be found. But He reveals to us that in the denial of our prayer—as we phrase it—there comes the fuller answer of His wisdom and His grace, like a voice from the innermost shrine of the temple creating spiritual understanding and spiritual sensitiveness. I know that prayer and spiritual progress are intimately connected in every individual life. I do not think it is possible for us truly to grow unless we know something of the deeper meaning of prayer. . . . Souls who yield themselves to God's will are changed from glory to glory. You know how "grey water will shine when the sun strikes it, yet with the passing of the sun it assumes its greyness again ; but a rose, once the sun has brought out its bud, remains a rose though the sun be clouded from sight." The soul that constantly communes with God, that prays—in this real sense of the union of the human will with the Divine—not only shows God's likeness but becomes at one with Him. This is the experience of the men and women who, by the discipline of love, have trodden the way of the Cross. Mark Rutherford has truly said : " The one staff which, perhaps may not break under us, is the victory achieved in the like situation by one who has preceded us ; and the most desperate private experience cannot go beyond the Garden of Gethsemane."

My faith is, that fuller knowledge of the Divine will is perhaps the divinest response that any soul

can receive. What do the captains of the spiritual life say? They affirm, that to every experience of prayer denied there is a deep and solemn meaning which it is our spiritual education to understand. God's inward responses are not to be paraded for discussion, they are not things to be cited as evidence; and shrinking as we do from the indelicacy of reading genuine love letters in the Law Courts, we should shrink infinitely more from laying bare the spiritual secret of the soul tormented by prayer denied. . . .

"There was given to me a thorn in the flesh"—a *stake*, that is the significance of the Greek word, driven right through his body—and for this thing St. Paul besought the Lord thrice. How could he fulfil his life mission with this impediment? And indeed, St. Paul did not hesitate to characterise it as an emissary from Satan. It was, he thought, a diabolic thing; and his whole nature rebelled against it, just as you and I have revolted—it may be a hundred times—against something which seemed to threaten all that we held most dear. St. Paul said it was of the devil. But whether of the devil or not, it was taken up into the great purpose of God who said, "No, this thing is not going to be removed. It is to remain. Your body is to be exasperatingly sensitive, quivering in every nerve to the very end." Have we not all memories that but sharpen pain? My hearers, there are some things that never in this world will be removed from your life or mine, and we may pray three times, but the miracle will not happen. As things are they will remain to the last. And shall we say that God has forgotten to be

gracious, that He is not listening to our prayer, that He is a God who will not or cannot answer? Are we going to take refuge in rebellion of spirit or naked atheism? God forbid. Let us listen patiently and perhaps we too, like St. Paul, shall hear a voice saying "My grace is sufficient for thee." What if the stake in the flesh means an access of Divine grace in our life? What if this dire experience which will not pass away means a deeper knowledge of God's presence and power day by day? Shall we say that the anguish is too terrible? Or is the thorn no longer a diabolic thing, but become indeed the angel of God's grace? "My grace is sufficient for thee." Is God saying that to any soul in this congregation this morning? How varied our lives are, our experience and our ideals how different; and yet it must be that there are some men and women in this church in like case, with their thorn in the flesh, their unanswered prayers—the rapture of love blanched in the agony of sorrow; the beauty of sacrifice quenched in the solemnity of death. Are we to allow this thing—whatever it be—to destroy our spiritual life, to blast our communion with the Highest, or are we by Divine grace to find in it the discipline whereby God shall become more real and our spiritual life more precious? It is the price we have to pay for salvation, and, I suppose, in the end of the day the price will not seem too great.

"In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." And when your requests are made known unto God—they shall be granted? No, perhaps

not, but something better shall happen—" the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

" Lord, is it long that my spirit must wait ?

Man of Nazareth, Christ for me.

Deep is the stream and the night is late,

Grief blinds my eyes that I cannot see."

Dark and sad may be our experience. The long last mile we may still have to tread ; but we know in Whom we have believed ; and it shall then be with the soul, as we can imagine it to be with some bud long folded in the darkness of a slowly dying May night, as loosening its lips to the sun it bares the depth of its cup to the blue sky. The light of the Lord God shall fall around our heads.

REV. J. M. C. CRUM, M.A.

REV. J. M. C. CRUM, M.A.
(*Rector of Farnham, Surrey*).

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THE PEDAGOGUE LAW

REV. J. M. C. CRUM, M.A.

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ . . . but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. . . ."

Gal. iii, 24.

FIRST, one must get the meaning of the "schoolmaster" clear. He is not what we mean by "schoolmaster." He is the "pedagogue."

And the "pedagogue" is the slave who takes the boys to school. He sees them safe all the way there. He hands them over to the "schoolmaster" at whose schoolroom the good, industrious Greek boys are happy to arrive.

If one tried to imagine him, the pedagogue is a kindly and trusted old servant whom his master trusts to see Master Philip and Master Alexander (let us say) safe at the street crossings and unloitering whatever strange sights or sounds might tempt them to forget their school-hour. Chiefly he must watch over their deportment. They must be modest and demure. They must not stop to talk to strangers. They must behave as becomes *the beautiful and the good*, or, as we should say, young gentlemen. I expect he would sometimes be thought fussy and an interferer with pleasant sport by his quick-witted

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mischievous young charges. His work is to get them to school, not to amuse them. He is for the street, not for the school. It is not that Master Phil and Master Alec dislike school. That would, perhaps, be an English rather than an Athenian trait. I daresay St. Paul never thought of schooling as other than desirable, even when he was a child : an eager-eyed Jewish boy. The pedagogue is regarded as a not very interesting preface or introduction. It brings us to our book which we love to read. We are very glad to be at the school.

We can look in, still, at the Athenian boys at school. And, no doubt, they were happy enough there : learning how to chant Homer's battle stories and sea voyages, or how to play the flute or the lute ; while their dog sits, patiently, under the young master's seat, as well-behaved as his young master, all lesson time.

That will give us the work of the law, as St. Paul thinks of it when he writes Galatians and Romans. The law is the pedagogue leading the soul to the school. The soul is brought to Christ and is happy to learn from Him. The law brings us, very likely, against our wills. But to be there is love, joy, peace.

St. Paul, of course, is thinking of the Jewish law, but I would ask leave to think of this pedagogue-function as being discharged by every law in-so-far as it is truly law. This is a process which the human soul will experience under any real law. All roads lead to Rome. All laws lead to Christ.

You may state this scheme of things :—

(1) The soul unconscious of ignorance. Those who do Thy will and know it not or, who disobey thy will and equally know it not.

(2) Duty, the stern daughter of the voice of God, speaking to conscience. Duty, when the soul becomes conscious of her voice, is the pedagogue. And the pedagogue, the law, the sense of duty, lead to

(3) Christ, and His Grace and His Holy Spirit. The Son of God Who loved me and gave Himself for me. Faith in Him.

It is occupation for a life-time, to consider whether this is a true account of the life of the soul. And, I suppose, life is for most of us a continuous experiment. We make it in ourselves, we watch it being made by our neighbours. The Christian accepts it as a working hypothesis.

We, as we read, for example, watch the peoples who, in their religion, stop short in the middle of the second phase. Men become aware of some kind of law and sense of duty, and do not discover that it is the business of the pedagogue to get them on, to lead them through all sorts of distracting street scenes to the school. The pedagogue and his young masters stop on the way.

One might cite many examples. The Pharisees, of course, and, let us say, the Chinamen of old days, if it is true that they used to be content to "save their face." Travellers told us that it was no disgrace to a Chinaman to have offended, but to confess his offence was to "lose his face," and that *was* to be in disgrace. And so on. But I was struck by

an extreme example in the Egyptian "Book of the Dead."

The "Book of the Dead" is the guide to souls in the other world. The dead soul must know all the words which he has to say, as spells and charms and pass-words, in his weird way among the ghostly terrors of the place to which we shall all go when we leave this life.

At one awful moment we shall reach the Hall of Justice and there, in the presence of Osiris, our heart will be taken from us and weighed. It is a frightening thought. Our heart is taken out of our control and laid in one of the scales of the balance. And in the other balance sits Justice. And Osiris, the great god, sits and watches.

What shall a man say then?

The "Book of the Dead" provides him with appropriate words. He beseeches his heart to be true to him. He appeals to it, "My own heart, O heart of my mother, heart of my birth, heart that was mine on earth, do not rise up as a witness against me. Be my friend in the presence of the gods. Do not say: See there what he has done. Yes, he did do it."

What does all this mean?

The "Book of the Dead" puts into the mouth of the dead all sorts of claims. The Dead claims that he has never led the blind astray. I have not hurt anyone—murdered anyone, for example. I never did anything that led to a famine. I never made anyone weep. I was punctual and correct as to temple offerings. I measured and weighed exactly,

at the shop. I robbed no child of milk. I never drove off my neighbour's cow from his meadow. I never turned the water in the little canals into my garden when it ought to have been running into my neighbour's garden.

There is the sense of duty, the law. We feel that, as good Egyptians, we ought to have been like that. And so we will say we have been like that. The one terror is that we may lose our self-command and acknowledge that our heart condemns us. If we are not able to defend ourselves, what man or angel or god will defend us? So, as it appears to me, the pious Egyptian soul remains stationary on its way towards penitence and pardon and truth. He dare not be sincere. The pedagogue cannot get this young master of his forward. He will never, in this mood, get to school.

There is an old English "mystery play" which is a kind of mediæval English "Book of the Dead." The man lies dying; Everyman he is called. And one by one the things of this world around him melt away and become unreal. They cannot help or support him. His friends—he has passed out of their reach. His senses begin to grow dim. They leave him. He calls out for any good deeds of his now to support him. One weakly shrunken little good deed answers out of a corner of the room—too small and feeble to do much for him now. Then he calls upon Knowledge. That Knowledge sounds like knowledge of the Creed, orthodox Faith, or the like! But it is not that. It is the very helper that the Egyptian dared not let in. It is Acknowledge. It

is confession. It is repentance and self-surrender to the mercy and forgiving love of Christ.

The Christian sense of duty has been, here, a pedagogue, and leads the soul, adoring and grateful, into the peace of God.

The subject I am discussing is capable of infinite illustration. I must be content with these Pagan and Christian Books of the Dead. And I propose as a scheme of thought about these things, those three stages in a series: (1) Thoughtless innocence, simple naturalness. (2) Law, a sense of duty. (3) Christ and Christian faith.

And I ask a man to consider, does not the sincere attention of the soul to his experience of any law lead him to Christ?

In St. Paul is worked out the experiment of the Jewish law pedagoguing a Jewish soul. When St. Paul saw the Christ, he recognised that it was towards Him that the Jewish law had been leading him.

I have been reading the sayings of the Rabbi Hillel. A Jew argues that they are—I think he would say—very nearly equal in beauty to the sayings of Jesus. Certainly he argues that there is no difference between the two speakers which constitutes a difference which we express by saying, These are human, but those are Divine. And yet, to a Christian, Hillel is the pedagogue, and Jesus is the Teacher in whose school we are content to be. Or the Buddha's sayings, those four rules of the perfect soul, for example:—

(1) Love.

(2) Joy in the joy of others.

(3) Grief for the grief of others.

(4) Calm of the soul in its own joys and griefs.

Gautama's sayings are a noble law, a pure and high sense of duty. We cannot tell, I suppose, if we are not Buddhists, how they look to a Buddhist. But to Christians they look uncommonly like an Athenian pedagogue, leading Master Alec and Master Philip towards the schoolroom where Christ gives the peace and joy and love of which the Indian sage sat and meditated.

But for Britons the practical question is, What about the British sense of duty, the law that is unwritten and yet is supreme among dutiful, serious, British Britons. He may know very little of lawyer's laws, of what is tort and what is crime. But about some things he has a British conscience. It was given him in an English home, by a word from a mother or an elder brother. By a father's pleasure or silent disapproval. Or, at school, by what other young Britons said or did. The Briton believes in "kindness in another's trouble, courage in your own." He has his maxims, of which some of us grow tired at times, "Play the game," "Keep a straight upper lip," and so on. He must not be conceited or a snob or a bully or a cringing fellow or unsportsmanlike. He must be "a gentleman," though what that means would be difficult to define. We are not asked to define. We are asked to be this indefinable thing, "a gentleman." And the result of it all is a code of conduct and a type of character to which we all (so to speak) "take off our hat" when we

see it. But is it the schoolmaster, or the pedagogue? Can you stop content with this for your teacher, or is it another law teaching us just this: the way to get to Him who is the Truth?

That, I say, is a subject for a man's experiment. It requires utter sincerity to make the experiment with scientific truth. Often you cannot tell from a man's language whether he is on the Egyptian or the Mediæval English side, on the Pharisaic or the Christian side.

Tennyson has made Sir Richard Grenville say: "I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do." Sir Walter Scott's last words were (to Lockhart): "My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." Nelson says: "I have not been a great sinner." These sayings are far from the Pauline phraseology. Any well-instructed Christian could amend them. I put them before you to provoke your thought. I hold that sincere thinking will bring a man on his way. He will be discontented with the pedagogue in the street. He will go on towards Christ and His schooling, His discipline. To be His disciple is joy and peace in believing.

REV. ARCHIBALD CHISHOLM, D.LITT.

REV. ARCHIBALD CHISHOLM, D.Litt.

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THE HEALING TOUCH

REV. ARCHIBALD CHISHOLM, D.LITT.

*"Peter and they that were with him said,
Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee.
. . . Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me."*

Luke viii, 45, 46.

WHEN our forefathers lived among the rocks and caves, believing every tree to be haunted by a spirit and fearing the hostility of innumerable deities, the inhabitants of some Eastern lands enjoyed a civilisation much more advanced. As the centuries have passed, these people of the East have either remained unchanged or have fallen away from what culture they once possessed, while the West has advanced in every direction. What is the explanation? Why is this island on which we live not a coaling station under the sway of some world empire which has its headquarters in the East and which retains its hold over us as a naval base, from which it may effectively control the Atlantic? Such a development would not have been unnatural when we consider how far advanced of us Greece and Italy and some parts of the East were in an earlier epoch. Yet the East has stood still while the West has advanced; these peoples from whom so much might have been expected

remain hidebound by traditions which extinguish the true life of the spirit, and we speak of "The Changeless East." Mr. G. K. Chesterton has told us why they made no advance: "They did not experience the Great Change."

While other factors operated, we owe our present position to the fact that long ago there penetrated the dark caverns in which our forefathers assembled, the light which shone first in Galilee. There came to us with the Christian Gospel, the guidance which is requisite for all true advance. The truth that the Universe is the product not of many warring deities but of one Intelligent Mind, gave us the starting-point for science; the commandments, which had found their first expression in the legislation of Moses, became, as reinforced by Christian teaching, the basis of our code of law and ethics; and the faith first declared by One who in Galilee spoke as never man spoke, made our forefathers at home in a world in which formerly they had regarded themselves as the uncared for victims of the caprice of unseen powers.

RELIGION AS AN ATMOSPHERE

Apart from the inspiration which came with the Gospel of Christ, we would in all probability have been a backward people, marking time by the sun and subsisting on the crudest food, while the inability to secure sustenance for our population from our island resources would have created the necessity of setting apart certain rivers as places

in which unwanted children might be drowned, and outside of our cities there would doubtless have been places of doom to which the aged might be carried when they could no longer earn a livelihood. The least fortunate inhabitant of our country, however aggressively he may at times declaim against Jesus of Nazareth, is His debtor for all that is of real value in life. Like the people on the side of the lake who crowded round when Jesus landed, and who found themselves crushed against Him as he made His way through the throng, not one of us has been able to keep from pressing against Jesus.

In other lands it is the same. Many years have elapsed since Tagore wrote his novel "*Gora*." The author would refuse to acknowledge himself a Christian, and the members of the Brahmo-Somaj household which he depicts would be equally unwilling to claim Christ as Lord, but the spirit of Christ is shown as all-pervasive, and since the novel was written this has become even more true in India. In the room in which the head of the household studies, there are only two portraits, one of the honoured founder of the movement and the other of Jesus Christ ; a young priest who frequents the home regularly, declares that he has exhausted the scriptures of his people and that he intends to devote what time he has to the study of the Christian teaching ; while one daughter constantly reads "*The Imitation of Jesus*," by Thomas à Kempis.

Though the spirit of Jesus is winning its way in all lands, the victories of the Cross are insignificant

in comparison with what they might be, and the explanation is to be found in the indifference which prevails within the Christian Church to the call of the world around. We do not believe for a moment that the Church is as weak as some people declare it to be ; otherwise we should prepare for the final obsequies of a once powerful but now dying faith. Many are determined as never before to throw off the shackles of traditions which have lost their significance, and to face the situation in the power of the Spirit of God ; yet multitudes have made an easy peace with the *status quo*, and have settled down to a life untroubled by the ever-present challenge of the flagrant evils which exist on every side. An American writer has done less than justice to his country when he accepts Ramsay Muir's picture as a true description. The nations are described as Alpine travellers who have been overtaken by disaster. Some have fallen beyond recovery, for the rope which binds them to the others has been broken ; only one is in a position of security and he is portrayed as unwinding the rope which binds him to the others. Whatever other nations may do, it is a sign of death for any nation to live to itself alone, and it is equally fatal for an individual to refuse to accept the responsibilities which devolve upon him ; but unfortunately too many spend their days satisfied with the measure of comfort provided for their own lives by the teaching of Jesus, and neglectful of the urgent call which they should be hearing to labour so that the walls of God's eternal city may arise. This

indifference has arisen because many who proclaim themselves to be followers of Jesus, have done little more than inhale the atmosphere of the Christian message. They have no desire to spread the good news because they have no religious experience to communicate ; to be effective, religion must become a living force in the life of the individual.

RELIGION AS A PERSONAL POSSESSION.

In the crowd which gathered round the jetty as Jesus approached there were two people for whom His coming meant everything. Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, was in despair ; his child was dying and Jesus was his only hope. The sorrow of Jairus was known to all, but none knew of the secret aspirations of the woman who eagerly awaited His approach. Perhaps she had never seen Him before. Twelve years of suffering in which all her money had been expended on treatment which in no wise improved her sad condition, had brought her almost to despair. If Jesus could not help, then she would have to give up hoping. Too timid to proffer her request as Jairus had done, she touched for a moment one of the four tassels of His garment and found herself healed. Gladly would she have hurried from the swaying crowd, rejoicing in the health she now believed to be hers, but gently the Master's question was heard, " Who touched me ? " Sensitiveness, cowardice, agitation—let us call it what we will—but the woman refused to acknowledge her action, and Peter spoke of the

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impossibility of the Master passing through such a crowd without many being forced against Him. "The multitudes throng thee and press thee, and why sayest Thou, Who touched me?" "Somebody hath touched me," Jesus repeated; and now we find the weeping woman falling down before Him and telling the whole story. There was a great difference between the heedless contact of an individual with no heart-longing and no intensity of desire, and the urgent faith of this woman who cared for nothing so long as she might receive the help and power which the Master alone could give. For the others Jesus was a teacher able to give words of counsel to the multitude; for her, He was the bringer of new hope and life, and in the days to come the memory could never be obliterated of the hour in which her life was brought into contact with His.

In the Christian Church we are constantly faced with the truth of the power of Jesus to help and to deliver, and the salient doctrines of our faith penetrate our thought so completely, that we cannot free ourselves from them even if we wish; but those for whom Christianity is merely the declaration of a system of truth with which they are in accord, or the proclamation of a standard which they do not deny but which they cannot effectively reach, have not yet found the secret which made the early Church. Religion should be a personal possession, and the Church which is true to Reformation truth must persistently proclaim this. In an earlier day, when our country was occasionally placed under an

interdict, and the ordinances of religion were refused to the people, our nation naturally regarded itself as under a cloud. If the priests would not dispense sacraments, how could men feed on the bread of life; if the voice of the Church could not be heard proclaiming absolution, how could one without grave apprehension face the life to come? Soon a message was heard through Europe which made it possible for men to see that no Church could cut off the child of God from living contact with his Father in heaven, and that however valuable and indeed indispensable the officially appointed ministers of the Christian Church might be for the well-being of organised religion, no one is required to intervene between the soul and God. "The priesthood of all believers." "All the Lord's people are priests." Each man, however untutored, might hear in his own heart the voice which in his hour of repentance said, "Thy sins are forgiven," and the blessing of God might be the portion of multitudes over whose bowed heads no priestly benediction had been pronounced.

No Church can corner the bread of life and give it to the hungry at the terms it appoints; the God who "provides for the raven his food" is ever ready to satisfy with the bread of heaven those who with earnest hearts call on His name. The revelation of God is not imparted only to a few appointed by the Church, that they may receive a direct communication from God to declare to the world; the Eternal Voice is for ever broadcasting the words of life, and all whose hearts are attuned may hear the Word of God. In so far as the Church

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has lost the note of joy which was so apparent in the early Church, and has become accustomed to routine observance and a sense of powerlessness, it is because the individuals who compose the Church have not realised sufficiently the need that each should dig down deep to the hidden springs which nourish the religious life.

While for some, personal religion will always be associated with a sense of peace in God and of inalienable joy, men of a different temperament may at times wonder if for them religion has become personal when they are conscious of no songs in the night and of no strange ecstasy. For such, the test must be whether they find in their lives an influence operating which makes them more loyal to those truths which Jesus proclaimed and more responsive to the call to extend the Kingdom of God. There are for many, dull hours when nothing seems worth while, when like the adventurers in Frank Hendon's "Backwater," men are eager to escape from the claims of life and to remain untroubled.

" Unconscious of the world and its long questions ;
Unconscious of the steady lapse of summer ;
Unconscious of our breathing, even of life,
Thinking no bitterness and dead to life."

If this has become our prevailing attitude, then it is time to examine ourselves carefully ; but if after the dull day passes we respond to the call again, we are able to do so only because we have found to some degree the secret of God.

‘ With the new born day, the sweet rest over,
Gladly to follow the great white road once more ;
To work with a song on the lip and the heart of a
lover
Building the city of peace on the wastes of war.”

For those who have no personal conviction of the power of God in their own lives, the remainder of this story is of service, for there we discover a practical method of fostering the life of the Spirit.

RELIGION IN ITS EXPRESSION.

Why did Jesus not leave the woman to cherish her great happiness in secret ? Was it because He was afraid she might imagine that the magic of His garment had wrought the cure, and so return to her home with a form of devotion which was more a superstition than a religion ? There was no need in this case for Jesus to have singled her out as He did. He might easily have interrupted his teaching and have said, “ In the midst of the crowd there is someone who has touched My garment and whose act was no accident. Let Me say to this person that there must be no mistaken idea of the power of my garments. Only through faith has the great work been accomplished.” This would have made clear to the woman the significance of her act. Instead, He who ever showed unfailing courtesy waited until she overcame her shyness, and made her secret action known to all. Might not Jesus have been more considerate ? If a strong man like

THE HEALING TOUCH

Peter had tried to steal a blessing, such a man might well have been forced into the open, but why this timid, long-suffering woman ?

Jesus was struggling for a human soul. Far more important than the healing of the body was the beginning of the work of faith within her heart, and if she had kept secret the nature of her experience, and had not been led to give public expression to her indebtedness to Christ, she might easily have become forgetful of the hour when her faith was born. The good work which had begun must be continued, and it was essential that in some way she should commit herself irrevocably to the pursuit of the new hopes which had arisen within her, and so for her sake and for her sake alone, Jesus led her to express her faith in action. "Whoso confesseth me before men, Him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven." This is perpetually true because the man who cherishes a faith which he never manifests to the world, but which he keeps as a secret possession without allowing it to alter his life, will soon find that there is no faith left for him to declare. The confession may be as much by the words we refrain from uttering as by the words we utter ; by the pursuits we do not follow as much as by the actions we perform. True faith must express itself.

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord ? "

Some may utter these words in whose hearts an

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earlier joy has been transformed into enduring and abiding trust ; in other cases they are a declaration of the decline and fall of a soul. Faith has died down, and like Saul of old, men " wist not that the spirit had departed." The reason often is that no endeavour has been made to translate the new-found faith into service of such a kind that the world will interpret the new service as a sign of unmistakable loyalty to Christ. The way of advance for many is to be found not so much in a more intense desire to find the secrets of the life of prayer, necessary as this is in most cases, but in a greater willingness to accept whatever responsibility we find ourselves called to face. " Come unto me," the Master said, and multitudes responded, but when the road was difficult their enthusiasm waned until at last, when the numbers around him were few, the Master said, " Will ye also go away ? " While many came and soon departed, some loyal souls there were who came to stay, and these were they who did not only hear the call to come, but obeyed loyally the accompanying challenge : " Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me."

REV. PROFESSOR GEORGE JACKSON, D.D.

REV. PROFESSOR GEORGE JACKSON, D.D.

DR. JACKSON is a native of Grimsby. He entered the ministry of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1887. After one year in the Clitheroe Circuit he became Superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission in Edinburgh, where he remained for eighteen years. In 1906 he accepted a call to the Sherbourne Methodist Church, Toronto, and in 1909 was elected to the Chair of English Bible in the Victoria College, Toronto University. In 1913 he returned to England to take up work on the staff of Didsbury College, Manchester, and there—save for three years of the war, when he took charge of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Brixton Hill, London—he has since remained. He is a graduate of London University, an honorary D.D. of Aberdeen, and the author of a number of religious and miscellaneous works. During the last ten years he has been a regular contributor to the *Manchester Guardian*.

AN ARGUMENT FOR IMMORTALITY

REV. PROFESSOR GEORGE JACKSON, D.D.

“ Whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” Acts ii, 24.

A YOUNG officer in the Great War was just going into battle—it is Canon Hannay (better known as “George A. Birmingham”) who tells the story. “I wish you would tell me what you think about it, padre,” he said to the chaplain of his regiment. “Is there really anything afterwards? I’d like you to tell me, as man to man, what you actually think about it. Do we go on living afterwards in any sort of way, or”—he struck a match to light a cigarette. A gust of wind blew the match out. Perhaps it was that which suggested his next word : “Or do we just go out? I know the Creed,” he went on, “but that’s not what I want. I want to know what you really believe yourself, as a man, you know. You mustn’t think I’m an atheist,” he said, “or a sceptic, or anything like that; I’m not. I used to go to church pretty regularly. I used to go to Communion sometimes, with my mother, you know. I never doubted about any of the things I was taught. I just took them as

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they came. I supposed they were all right. Anyhow, I didn't bother. But now I want to know."

I didn't bother, but now I want to know. The words indicate, in their challenging sincerity and directness, the change that has come in the minds of multitudes of the men and women of this generation toward the great question of life after death. Twenty years or so ago men were not "bothering." "In the thinking of civilised men," said Sir George Adam Smith, in his famous Yale Lectures on Preaching in 1899, "there has been for years a steady ebb from the shores of another life." That was largely true even within the Church itself. We had almost ceased to sing the old hymns about heaven; a strange hush had fallen on the pulpit itself. As for the man on the street, though he was concerned about many things, it was very rarely that this was one of them.

I need not pause to ask what were the causes that led to this indifference. Some will find an explanation in the grossness or light-heartedness that lives only in and for the passing hour. If man elects to live the life of a beast or a butterfly, is it any marvel that he is as little concerned about the future as are they? But the causes were not all unworthy. There is a noble as well as an ignoble absorption in the things of this life; and the indifference to which I have referred was, in part at least, the inevitable and just reaction from the exaggerated "other-worldliness" of an earlier generation—man's just resolve to set up the Kingdom of God here and now, in this present order of things,

and not merely at some future and far-off day. But whatever may be the truth about yesterday—and with that I am not at the moment concerned—to-day a change has come. That ebbing tide has turned. If yesterday men were not “bothering,” to-day they “want to know.” The war, which changed so many things, has left its mark here also, and since 1914—how, indeed, could it be otherwise?—men have been asking, and asking with a new note of intensity in their words, “Is there anything afterwards, or do we just go out?”

Signs of the change are to be read on every hand. Hardly a month, hardly a week, goes by but some new discussion of the old problem issues from the Press. We may think that there is nothing new to be said about it, that everything that can be said, on the one side and on the other, has been said, and said a hundred times already. That is true; but it does not stop the debate; it only shows how profoundly men are interested in it. Even more significant, perhaps, is the rapid spread during recent years of what is called “Spiritualism.” Of Spiritualism itself I have, at the moment, nothing to say except this: that if God has anything to teach us by it—I am not yet sure that He has—I want to learn it. Meanwhile, whatever we think about Spiritualism, can anybody see that vast crowd of pilgrims thronging “the road to Endor” and not be impressed by it? “Poor silly dupes,” some one may say, “poor silly dupes, every one of them.” Well, perhaps; though that is not language that some of us find it easy to use where

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men like Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and F. W. H. Myers are concerned. But dupes though they may be, at least they are not indifferent ; the old unconcern has gone ; men are "bothering," they want to know—"If a man die shall he live again ? "

I

Now, obviously, in a matter of this kind, proof, in the sense in which we use the word in mathematics or formal logic, is out of the question ; and if any man refuse to believe until such proof be forthcoming, he will need to wait until death comes—and then, of course, he will not need it. But if, in this sense, there can be no proof of immortality, equally there can be no disproof. Whether the Christian doctrine of a future life be or be not well founded, is a matter to weigh and consider ; but, in any case, neither physical science, nor anything else, can interpose any veto in advance.

Not many years ago, as some readers will remember, we used to hear a crude materialistic logic of this kind : "Mind," it was said, "is a function of matter. My power to think depends upon a merely physical something that we call the brain. Disease, which impairs the one, deranges the other ; when death comes it makes an end of both." That there is a very subtle and intimate relation between mind and matter, spirit and body, we are all well aware ; but what, precisely, is the nature of that relation ? A simple illustration, which I borrow

from William James, will make the significance of the question clearer. A housewife puts her kettle on the kitchen fire. Presently steam issues from the spout of the kettle. What is the relation between the fire and the steam? It is causal; that is to say, it is the fire that has produced the steam; put out the fire, and there will very quickly be no more steam. Is that the kind of relation in which brain and mind stand to one another? If it be, there is, of course, no more to be said; death, which ends the one, will end the other also. But that kind of relation is just the thing that nobody ever did and ever could prove. Things may be related that are not causally related; they may be simply concomitants, things that go together. And that is all that anybody knows about the relation of body and spirit. Why it is that certain movements of the brain always accompany the activities of consciousness, is a problem in the presence of which our wisest science can only confess itself bankrupt; and therefore, as a modern man of science himself declares, "the materialistic assumption that the life of the soul ends with the life of the body is perhaps the most colossal instance of baseless assumption that is known to the history of philosophy."

If, then I repeat, there can be no "proof" of immortality, equally there can be no disproof; the door is open for the Christian believer to advance such reasons as he can for the faith that is in him. It is of one of these of which I wish to say something now.

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II

Let us take as our starting-point the words of Peter about Jesus addressed to the crowd in Jerusalem shortly after the Resurrection: "Ye men of Israel," he said, "hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him . . . ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

"It was not possible that he should be holden of it." Let us try to follow the path which had led Peter to that goal. For three years he had accompanied with Jesus; he had seen His "mighty works": he had heard His yet more wondrous words; and then, beyond all that He did or said, there was Himself. For three years Peter had been with Him, and the white wonder of that holy life had drawn and held him like a spell. And now *Him*, "the best of men that ere wore earth about him," lawless men had crucified and slain. Peter had seen it all, with his own eyes or through the eyes of others—the rough cross stained with blood, and the man whom he had loved and followed, and for whom he would have died, pinned there like some foul vermin of the fields. Well, was that to be the end of it all? In a life like His was death—and such a death—to have the last word? It could not be. If that were so, if death were indeed the

end of *Him*, then this is not God's but some almighty demon's world. No, "it was not possible that *He* should be holden of it."

Such was Peter's argument, and, as will readily be seen, it admits of very wide extension. Re-stated in modern terms, what it comes to is this: we believe in a life after death because we believe that a righteous God is in control, and that He will see to it that the eternal values are preserved. And what do we mean when we speak about "the eternal values"? Goodness? Yes, surely; yet not goodness alone; goodness, truth, beauty, all the things, as Wordsworth says,

" . . . whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
That they were born for immortality.

. . . The Good, the True, the Pure, the Just—
Take the charm 'For ever' from them, and they
crumble into dust."

Yet it is particularly of "the Good" that we think when we have Jesus in mind; for it is to the order of "the Good" that He Himself belongs. His place is not so much with the wise who are the interpreters of truth, nor with the artists who are the interpreters of beauty, but with the saints who are the interpreters of goodness. And as Peter argued that it was not possible that death should have dominion over Him, in the same way every good man's grave is an argument for immortality. Indeed, it is not the least of the many services that

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the good man does for his generation, that he trims and feeds the flickering lamps of our faith and hope. When life all around us is arid and selfish and mean, it is easy to doubt. But every good man stamps life with a new significance ; he makes immortality credible ; may we not say he makes anything else incredible ? The real argument for immortality, as some one has pointed out, in those famous dialogues about death and the future which we owe to the genius of Plato, is not the arguments ; the real argument is just Socrates himself. Who can believe, in a world in which Socrates lived and died—and still more, in a world in which Jesus lived and died—that death is going to have the last word ? It is not possible that they and such as they should for ever be holden of it ; our faith in the reasonableness of things will not let us believe that the last act in the human drama is always tragedy : “ on God and godlike men we build our trust.”

“ On God and godlike men ”—but chiefly on God. The better we understand this deathless hope of dying man the more clearly is it seen to be rooted there. It is not simply an instinctive shrinking from the thought of annihilation, that like a burnt-out match we “ just go out ” ; nor is it only the wistful dream of hearts that ache to be again with those whom they “ have loved long since and lost awhile ” ; at bottom, and in itself, it is part of our faith in God. No one, perhaps, ever felt this more strongly than did Tennyson. “ I have heard him,” says his friend James Knowles, “ thunder out against an opponent : ‘ If there be a God that

has made the earth and put this hope and passion into us, it must foreshow the truth. If it be not true, then no God, but a mocking fiend, created us, and I'd shake my fist in His almighty face, and tell him that I cursed Him ! I'd sink my head to-night in a chloroformed handkerchief and have done with it all.' " These are fierce and passionate words, too passionate and fierce, we may think, for a matter like this (Tennyson's belief in personal immortality was, Knowles says, almost the strongest passion that he had) ; but, however we may judge his words, Tennyson was surely right in this, that a faith in God that is worth anything at all carries with it, as part of itself, faith in immortality likewise. If that is not so, if—to take one illustration out of a thousand—if that endless row of young men's graves in France—if that is for them the end of it all, then what we have fondly counted the Creator's crowning work is but as futile as the tiny sand-castles which our children build by the seashore on summer days, only to be washed away again by the next tide, and all our life is a riddle of which we have lost the key. But if God is what Jesus said He is, the key is here, in our hands ; we know He will not suffer us or ours to be holden of death. And the surer we are of Him the surer we are of that.

It is just at this point that the Old Testament makes its one contribution to our faith in immortality. For the most part, as every careful reader knows, the Old Testament is silent concerning the future life. But here and there the long silence is broken ; have we noticed where and how ? Take

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a word like this, for example, from one of the Psalms:

“ Whom have I in heaven but thee ?
And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.
My flesh and my heart faileth :
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever—”

as if something in the psalmist had risen up to ask what death has to do with a fellowship like that. Come what may, the soul is surely safe with Him Who has made Himself so real :

“ Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol,
Neither wilt thou suffer him whom thou lovest to see corruption.”

III

A word may be added—for “ we are all pragmatists now ”—on the relation of what has been said to daily life, since in many ways which we but rarely recognise our life here and our hope of life hereafter act and react continually one upon another. “ Every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” “ Begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible ”—there is man’s high destiny ; and here is the word of exhortation which the Apostle builds upon it :

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“Love one another from the heart fervently.” That is how the immortal hope is meant to work, in the purifying and enriching of all our life. And, on the other hand, it is the life we are living now which feeds or which starves the hope of life hereafter. How should a man believe in immortality whose mind is set on nothing that deserves to be immortal? “Eternal life” in the New Testament is never a mere synonym for existence that never ends; always it stands for a certain quality of life. And the only way in which we can win for ourselves a real and worthy hope of immortality is by making life rich in experiences that bear upon them the seal of eternity. “The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” That is the life—“the life which is life indeed—which has the witness in itself” that it shall live for evermore.

REV. LAUHLAN MACLEAN WATT, D.D.

REV. LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT, D.D.
(*Minister of Glasgow Cathedral*).

AUTHOR of "The Grey Mother and Songs of Empire," "The Tryst, a Book of the Soul," "The Land of Memory," "Scottish Life and Poetry," and many volumes of verse, criticism, fiction and divinity. M.A., B.D., D.D. Edinburgh University. Ministries: Turriff; Alloa; St. Stephen's (Edinburgh)—all over 2,000 communicants; since 1923, Glasgow Cathedral. Served in France and Flanders with Gordon Highlanders and Black Watch; and in America on War Propaganda in 1918.

THE DYING FLAME

LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT, D.D.

"Our lamps are going out."

Matt. xxv, 8. (R.V.)

THIS is not a dirge for us, but a warning and incentive, though it may seem to be a somewhat doleful phrase. It has alongside of it the picture of lamps that keep burning—the secret of a brighter radiance for the deepening dark.

The parable is peculiar to St. Matthew: but it may be taken as belonging to that class represented by the Parable of the Tares, and the Wedding Garment, in which clean divisions are discerned between the evil and the good. No hard and fast interpretations need be attached to the number ten, which was simply used as a round number, completing the progression of the units. Ten is the pivot of ordinary computations. Nor need there be any trouble over the division into "five wise and five foolish." The parable holds most for us in certain clearly outstanding facts.

I

The ten virgins took not merely their lamps, but

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their own lamps. These were their own personal possessions. They knew what they were taking. But this does not imply any real difference among them. For the five who are called foolish are not rebuked as having their lamps untrimmed, or not ready to be lighted, nor as being unlit, nor even as having either old lamps or new. What was wrong was that they had not brought with them, into the highway, what should feed the flame. Their folly was not intellectual ignorance, nor mental weakness, but lack of pre-vision. Their sin was not in being without a lamp, but in failing to provide what should keep the lamp burning till the crisis of the darkness passed. There was intelligence enough, otherwise the issue is unjust; but they had that slackness of vital interest, that want of fire in the soul, which makes for disaster and remorse, when the hour of necessity is past, and the vigil has been vain.

They all knew—as we all know—how essential is light for any vigil through the gloom, how magical is even a faintest gleam along the solitude, what companionship is in a flame; making us realize how naturally fire was reckoned a heavenly mystery, and the winning of it for man something like a divine theft.

They all slumbered and slept, or, rather, drowsed and fell asleep. There is in this no difference among them. They had all laughed and sung themselves dead tired. Even the wise slept. These had not scrutinized their comrades, and never seemed to have discerned that they were unprepared and

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unreliable for any emergency. Although they had gone forth together, each was acting on her own scheme. But the wise slept with foresight. They had not necessarily hearts more wakeful than the others, but they had looked over the shoulder of risk and were prepared for the awakening. The implements of their necessity were at hand.

The foolish knew all the while where the vital necessities were to be had, and they ran at last to purchase. But they found that eagerness too late is only bitterness of utter loss postponed.

The natural result of such is that they are not on the spot in the crisis. They fail God. They let Christ down. They shut their eyes, and opportunity goes past to her own place.

They forgot that there is an awakening, and that every awakening is at an awkward hour. Every crisis is a midnight moment. It is the turn of the tide, to lose which involves either hard toil at the oars, or waiting for the next tide, missing the grace of present opportunity and the call of duty. And as the foolish awake, they realise their folly in the cry, "Our lamps are going out." A lamp will burn till the oil dries, and then expires in flickering spasms. They still had the badges and symbols of service, but the flame was being smothered in ashes. And it had either to be left to burn to the socket, or it must be blown out.

Now, does it not stand up clearly what this means for us, in every phase of life?

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II

God is kept vividly before the soul by the honest faith of the individual. The decisive thing in a crisis is not the lamp, but what feeds the flame—not the vessel, but what is in it—not the form, but the life—not the ritual but the spirit—not the utterance of the life, however sweet, but the deep fulness of the heart. Shallow religion is always dangerous. The stones in its stream are slippery. Better to venture in, heart-deep, near even to drowning, in the tide of Faith.

This parable has nothing to do with mere works. It has to do with the furnishing of the soul, which secures practical reasonableness as the secret of continuity. The pain of it arises from the fact that the foolish ones knew. The light that was in them was darkness. They slept when they should have been awake; and they should have been awake because they were not ready for either the sleeping or the waking, having made no arrangements for either, while they had the chance. Yet Christ does not blame them nor us because we grow weary and sink and slumber. His mercy is wide. The hospitality of His pity is deep. For He remembers. He, too, knew fatigue that held Himself in sleep, even in midst of stormy seas, till the fear of the hearts of others awoke Him. But He blames the lack of ordinary foresight. He knew how masterful is sleep, that makes a strong man forget even his love, watching beside the bed of death, until his heart, outworn, can no longer keep ward against the

king of dread—sleep that takes the bravest captain in the field, and swathes the sentry all about with forgetfulness, till through their dream the enemy find the breach unguarded, and valour is vain. His censure falls upon the selfish lethargy which forgets the constant duty of the watching heart, when every hour is a crisis, and every day has a judgment in its shadow.

What He warns us against is the slow dying of the soul—the process of extinction of noble aspiration—the lamp going out through simple shut-eyed negligence.

Our life is a constant preparation. We acquire a watchful habit, if we be true. Though we drowse, “our heart waketh.” A footfall, a wind-blown whisper in the dark, opens our sleepbound eyes; and we are ready for the arrival of our destiny. Otherwise, all else is labour lost; our life is limited, and the dawn is bitter with unavailing tears, too late. There can be nothing more fraught with anguish than to wake to realization that we have failed, and failed through our own fault—that our lamps are going out for lack of our own foresight.

All can watch—for a while. All the lamps were burning at first; and they burned for a certain time. But those who had supplies with them had only what their vigil demanded. Even Eternity does not waste itself in Time. No man gets more than he requires. God’s promise is, *As thy day so shall thy strength be*. And that is always enough. The manna is *for every day’s need*. The daily bread is *for this day*. We can hoard money, but we cannot

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hoard grace. For God, whose grace is infinite, gives us just what we require.

Nor is the refusal on the part of the wise to give of their oil to the foolish in their extremity a commendation of selfishness. Most of us do not need to learn that: and if we did it is not from Christ that we should get the lesson. It reminds us that humanity goes to God as individuals. At the last low door the rule of the crowd withers. God's march-past is an individual review. And it is not wearing the uniform, nor keeping in step with the majority, that wins, but having the heart all the time willing, vigilant and ready.

It is the foolish who are selfish. They would sleep into rewards that cost other people blood and tears. By allowing their lamps to go out they are also mean to others. For it is a common duty to shine. The lamp whose flame God supplies lightens the way around us: but each heart, believing, must have that light for itself, so making, finally, by linked-on helpfulness of fidelities, the whole earth luminous for humanity and God. Where one heart fails in faithfulness the lamp goes out: and there is a black stretch of darkness in the procession, more saddening than when a star dies out of heaven.

III

Every day we are either fighting a battle or running away from one—facing a stern task or

evading a duty. There is scarce an hour in which we are not on the watershed of decision, in thought, speech and conduct. The hour may hold eternity in germ: the minute may be the epitome of a life. We move ascendingly by facing, with masterly resolve, turning points at which we encounter that vital crisis, masked, which demands immediate answer, "Yes," or "No"—"Your money or your life." How does the lamp shine, then, for us? Will our candle gutter out in trembling hands? Or is the flame steady and bright, with which we scrutinize the face of the difficulty that confronts us? Or must we grapple in the dark, to limp with shrunken sinew from the struggle, when the dawn is breaking over the Brook Jabbok of our strife?

The plain truth is that the lamp we take down from the wall ere we go forth for duty may have hung there long enough, till it is dry. It was well cleaned ere we hung it on its nail, scrubbed by hard-working hands that knew their task, and knew what a lamp was for, until it shone. But it will fail us in the soul's emergency unless it have within it the simple secret of a flame. The faith we need must be different from the mere fact of having been born a Christian, or having been brought up in a Christian home—from having just to put up our hand in a well-furnished house to find, beside the door, what we require. The faith which will be the true strength for our vigil must be more than simple habitual rectitude which keeps us from doing or going wrong because it is bad form or bad taste, or the mere fastidiousness which holds us from lust or sin because

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of the uncleanness of it. We need a faith born and re-born daily—a faith that may bend and yet never break—that may flicker, yet never die—a faith that will make even our dead faces shine as with a new life, where we fall, holding the gap for Christ, in the dark.

Before we go forth we must ask, “What of the duty that summons us? What of the day or the night before us?” We may need that lamp for three score years and ten, or for twenty, or for one, or for a single day, or for a brief hour’s watch. We do not know, as we go forward, where the slippery stone may be, or the string across the road in the night. Will the flame last through our necessity? Will our faith shine to the finish? Or, far from help, shall we see our lamp going out, leaving us blinded, alone, with the Unknown, which we cannot measure, closing in upon us?

We know not what crisis waits. What helps us then? Not a system out of dusty books of dead men’s opinions, which survive only because they were not buried with them. We shall have no time to search the index and turn up the page. No. But a constant living hope which flows from the reservoir of God, fed from a faith that fills the invisible with light in which we see the prints of pierced feet that have passed on before, and which touches the gloom with revealing wonder, showing us the angels of the Lord marshalled around our souls. That gives us the strength to live or die with the light undimmed, a help to ourselves, a guide to those who seek a strong place for a resolute upstanding—a spirit

independent of the treacheries of the passing mood, superior to the false alarm, and lifted above the bondage of the hope deferred. In the high calm of the sublime levels of Christ's watching places, we keep the steady flame until He come, or until the broad day breaks across the hills.

It is a poor plea, at the closed door of lost Opportunity, that we saw her passing by, if we neglected to follow her;—to say, "It was in *our* town that Thou hadst Thy dwelling once, O Christ. It was in *our* street that Thou didst preach Thy truth—it was on *our* hearts that Thou didst knock," when we never lingered by His doorstep, never listened to His word, never opened that He might enter in and bide with us till the evening time. It is no plea at all that we walked to Emmaus with no thought of Him in our breast; nor recognized His wounds as He brake bread in our dwelling; nor thought of Him until the shadows fell—till we saw our lamps flickering to the socket, and we were alone.

We are reminded, again and again, of our personal responsibility. We cast our burden on the Lord too easily and frankly, when He has already been carrying so much for us on His Cross. Every one of us must make an honest endeavour to carry our own. If it be too heavy for us He will wait, if we are honestly following Him.

Religion is only a vital fact when God is a vital fact within it—when its light is as real as the light of the sun, and chaste as the light of the stars. And that is when our hearts, filled with His Spirit, and the strength of His divine patience, become more

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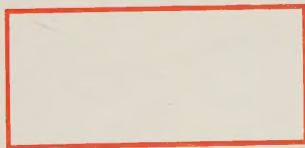
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and more aware of His immediate presence, as a sure fact in all true duty, and of the certitude of His entry, some time, into everything we endeavour to achieve.

True life is fellowship with God. The secret of its continuance is that it exists in Him—that the soul's vitality, the essence of the abiding flame, is *Immanuel, God with us*, all the time, and all the way.

The close of every day may seem to many only the finish of a trail of weary failure, as though we have tried to do our best, but our lamps are going out. Yet we ought not to be too ready to agree with our despondent mood; for we never know at what a windy corner we have been set to keep watch. We never know through what places of wild weather God has called our soul. The close of one day is the beginning of another. God may give us new lamps for old if we be faithful. So we must trust Him, and be patient in prayer. And we may find, that even at its lowest flicker, our hope, fed by our weakest faith, has been, and still shall be, a guarded flame. Love will watch with us, in life's deepest shadow. And faces we have loved crowd the door with welcome. And hands familiar lead us to our place. I believe I know that this is true. Therefore I tell it to you, for we must share our secrets as we go home to God.

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A red rectangular box with a thin border, intended for writing the due date.

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